DECEMBER 1961

Commentary

THE NEW FRONTIER FULFILLED
Oscar Gass

AT EASE IN ZION
Alfred Kazin

THE GRADUATE STUDENT: A PROFILE
Theodore Solotaroff

IDIOTS FIRST—A Story
Bernard Malamud

JAMES BALDWIN AS SPOKESMAN
Dan Jacobson

READING KHRUSHCHEV'S MIND
R.H.S. Crossman

EICHMANN'S VICTIMS AND THE UNHEARD TESTIMONY
Elie Wiesel

The Study of Man

Leo Marx:
"THE LONG REVOLUTION" AND THE BRITISH LEFT

Observations

Lewis A. Coser:
A WEEK IN WARSAW

Books in Review

Martin Mayer
on **JAMES B. CONANT'S "SLUMS AND SUBURBS"**

Dennis H. Wrong

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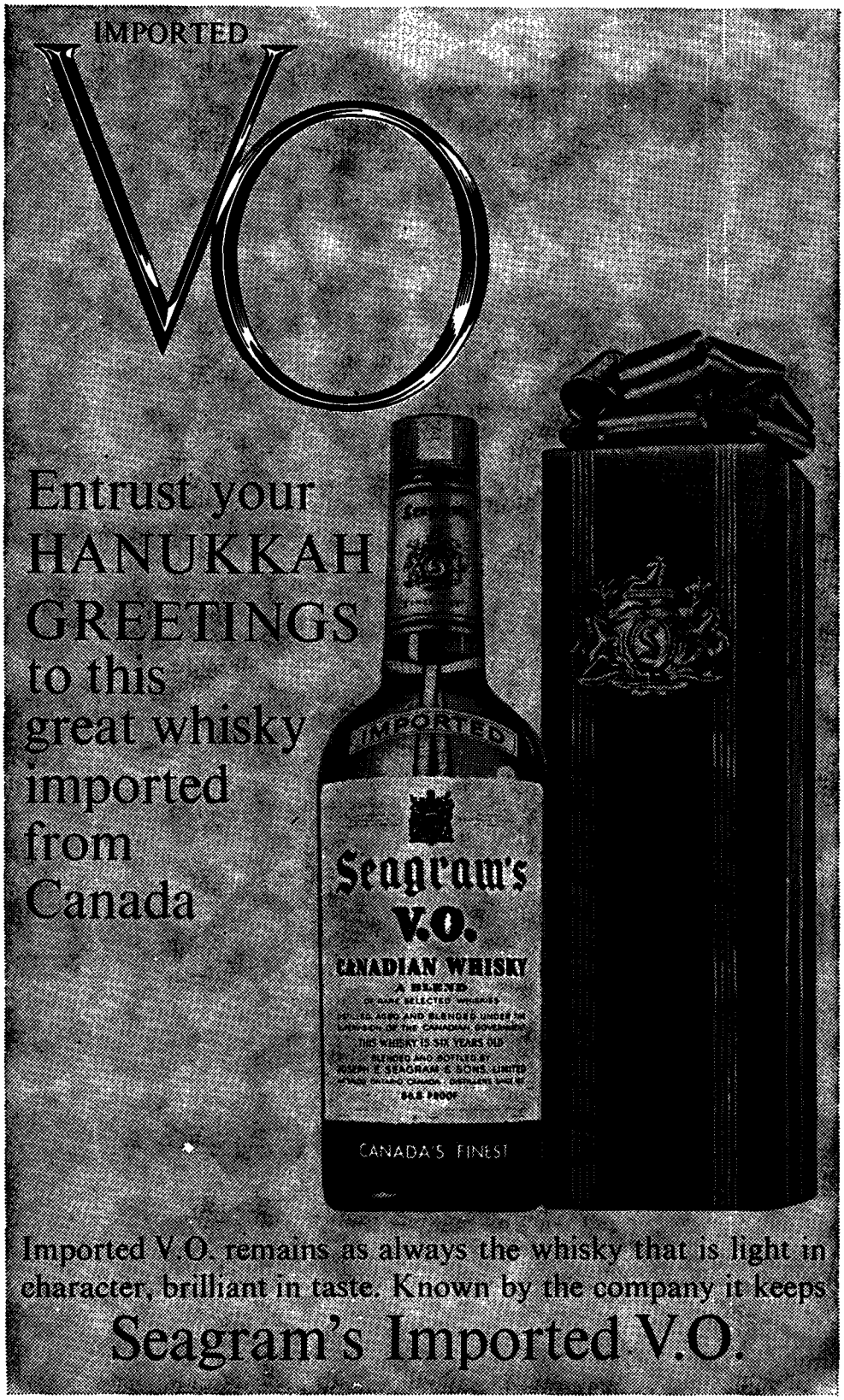
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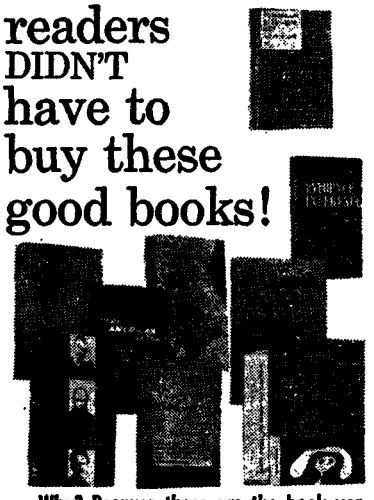

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Commentary

DECEMBER 1961
NUMBER 6
VOLUME 32

The New Frontier Fulfilled 461 OSCAR GASS

At Ease in Zion 474 ALFRED KAZIN

The Graduate Student: A Profile 482 THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

A Story Idiots First 491 BERNARD MALAMUD

James Baldwin as Spokesman 497 DAN JACOBSON

Reading Khrushchev's Mind 503 R.H.S. CROSSMAN

Eichmann's Victims & the Unheard Testimony 510 ELIE WIESEL

The Study of Man

"The Long Revolution" & the British Left 517 LEO MARX

Observations

A Week in Warsaw 524 LEWIS A. COSER

Letters from Readers 530

Books in Review

Slums and Suburbs, by James Bryant Conant 537 MARTIN MAYER

De Mahomet aux Marranes, by Léon Poliakov 540 ALBERT A. SICROFF

Marxism, by George Lichtheim 542 DENNIS H. WRONG

Fighter and Prophet: The Jabotinsky Story, by Joseph B. Schechtman 546 ELIAS COOPER

The Nation's Safety & Arms Control, by Arthur T. Hadley; Arms Control, Disarmament & National Security, edited by Donald G. Brennan 548 GORDON A. CRAIG

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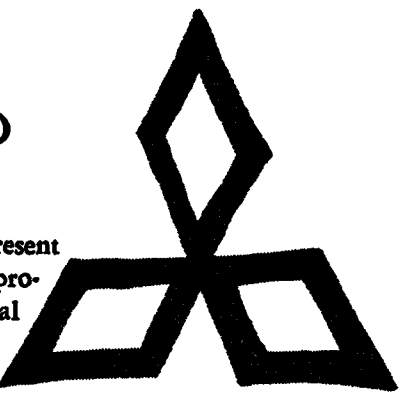

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THE NEW FRONTIER FULFILLED

OSCAR GASS

Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be: why then should we desire to be deceived?

—Bishop Butler
Fifteen Sermons, No. 7, par. 16

ONE YEAR AFTER the Presidential election of 1960, the New Frontier of President John F. Kennedy has acquired a firm place in a historic American series. There it stands alongside the Great Crusade of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Both fly flags of hardihood and high venture. Our age has no taste for the resonance of "business as usual": it prefers to flavor the day's round with a dash of high sentence. For this spice, Crusade and Frontier may serve equally.

But the Great Crusade and the New Frontier have far more in common than the language of high aspiration. Both mean the thoroughgoing acceptance of all that which is now—since the Great Depression and War and Demobilization—firmly established and fundamental in the domestic American economic, social, and political order. The institutional changes of the 30's and 40's are unchallenged. With the second Truman administration, all that is already in the past. From about 1948, there are no great innovations. At most, taxes are increased sharply during the Korean War and reduced significantly by Eisenhower and George Humphrey. Main Street and Wall Street alike live comfortably under a friendly sun.

In this conservatism of fundamental social outlook, Crusade and Frontier participate in a climate of opinion that reaches far beyond the United States. They share the general spirit of a time which begins in the late 1940's. In all non-Communist and economically advanced countries, this time—our own—is perhaps more stable and less subjected to internal challenge, in social and economic fundamentals, than any other period since the American and French revolutions. The yeast does not ferment. Elements of the socialist tradition have been absorbed, but a social-revolutionary alternative is nowhere taken seriously. It is well that we be clear about these things. So, we may avoid the aberration of judgment by trifling excitements and understand better our times and ourselves.

After this common ground of fundamental domestic conservatism, Crusade and Frontier are alike also in according primacy to foreign affairs. For both, social peace has the same urgent ground: how can Americans suffer themselves

OSCAR GASS, who is a consulting economist in private practice in Washington, D.C., has served as economic adviser to various foreign governments. His experience in government also includes a five-year period as a chief economist in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, under the Roosevelt administration. Among his previous contributions to COMMENTARY was a four-part series on current political ideologies (January, February, June, and July 1960).

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to be distracted and divided by trifling differences, when they are all called to the high duty of the worldwide struggle against totalitarian Communism? For both, what is to be done in the United States is to be determined not alone—perhaps even not primarily—by what is right as a domestic matter, but rather by what aids in the worldwide struggle. At the very least, domestic actions should contribute to a favorable "image" of America in the world. A decent respect for the opinions of mankind is, indeed, an old and honorable American tradition. But never before have the official spokesmen for the United States manifested so much concern over the national image or the national "posture." (President Kennedy is reported to favor "a posture of sacrifice.") Is it a clear mind and an enlightened conscience that are so sedulous of reputation?

I The New Administration

Never, I believe, in American national history has a change in the party holding the Presidency* been accompanied by so small a change in the personnel employed in the executive branch of the federal government. In the first Eisenhower administration, one liberal Republican, Mr. Harold Stassen, made a greater number of partisan dismissals than have been made by the whole Kennedy apparatus. The Eisenhower cabinet was genuinely and deeply suspicious of "hold-overs" from the previous administration. It took some years for them to stop looking under the bed for nonexistent radicals. There has been nothing remotely similar this time. The Eisenhower Republicans distrusted their predecessors in office; the Kennedy Democrats do not.

The drastically different experiences of the State Department are typical. In the 1930's and 1940's, the career Foreign Service officers had acquired a confidence of status greater than is otherwise found among the civilian personnel of the United States government. Under Dulles, that confidence was initially shattered. The Secretary of State dissociated himself from the career officers he had inherited and read them hectoring and threatening lectures. Eisenhower allowed them to be exposed to the full force of McCarthyism. Few in the State Department—or elsewhere in the federal government—had the character to speak for a maligned colleague. They feared, fell silent, shrank, and hid. But the cowering produced bitterness and sought a meager compensation in knowing glances and critical remarks to safe company. Work suffered. It was years before morale was restored. *This* time there is nothing of all that. Mr. Dean Rusk is of the Department and like it. He might have been chosen by a Foreign Service vote.

Reserving to himself public responsibility in foreign policy, the President has sought for businessmen and bankers to occupy many other high positions in public view. Undoubtedly he looks to men of business and finance in part—and in part rightly—as people who can make a policy and administer it. But in his choice of high officers the President has also clearly been seeking to stamp himself as a reasonable man of the political center. Surely he is no wild man who surrounds himself, by choice, with Ford and Inland Steel, the First Boston Corporation, and Dillon, Read and Company. When Mr. Kennedy was in trouble on foreign aid legislation, he deserted his former Democratic choice for Aid Administrator and sought out a prominent Republican banker (in turn, however, deserted to avoid a confirmation fight). When Mr. Kennedy needed a replacement for Allen Dulles at CIA, he chose another Eisenhower businessman, Mr. John A. McCone. When he has in hand

* I refer, once and for all, to my earlier essay on the first phase of the Kennedy administration, "Political Economy and the New Administration," in COMMENTARY, April 1961. I shall presume the ground covered there and not retrace it.

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a sensitive mission to Ghana, he commissions Mr. Eisenhower's own Clarence B. Randall. Mr. Douglas Dillon, Secretary of the Treasury, has helped clarify the picture. He has expressed himself publicly, with great candor, as failing to see any great difference between the Republican and Democratic administrations in which he has served. And there is every reason to agree that Mr. Dillon has carried on, without significant change, the fiscal and financial policies which he inherited at the Treasury.

After the business community, the chief source of policy officers in the new administration—as in the old—is the legal profession. The lawyers serve American governments as clergymen served a medieval monarch. Not themselves always men of power, they are still among power's most trusted administrators. (Our economists and public administration specialists, in contrast, are usually disqualified by training and mentality for dealing with high policy questions; they accordingly rarely rise above the service level.) The lawyers qualify as policy officers for many reasons: firstly, some knowledge of the law *is* helpful in finding one's way in public affairs under our constitutional system; secondly, the lawyers do have related experiences in adjusting private interests and claims; and finally, the lawyer's role as general counselor in business and property management is easily transferred to government.

In fact, the lawyers are the one effective professional group of civilian policy officers in the United States government. They are American government's professional wise men. And they are responsible for the greater part of such initiative as the staff work of the federal government does in fact display. But they suffer, painfully and visibly, under the New Frontier as before, from the lack of any general doctrine or direction. They are buyers of scraps of doctrine in many markets. Their knowledge of government regulatory activity or tax law is commonly technique, not philosophy. Recently some have been belatedly invigorated by winds that blow from Adam Smith, teaching the uses of free competition (anti-trust) and free trade (lower tariffs, common markets, etc.). They are not Keynesians: they were (like Franklin Delano Roosevelt) not sufficiently intellectual to master Keynes, and, besides, they quickly sensed that, among their best-placed private clients, not only "monetary management" but even "full employment" was frequently a dirty phrase. In contrast, the best of these lawyers were, in Washington, among the more appreciative readers of Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*. That book obviously struck them as helpful in providing an outlook to guide their work. But, even when they have read their Galbraith, one cannot look to the government lawyers for new thoughts. They are powerful and effective brokers in received ideas, not venturers on unmapped frontiers.

II The Congress

To those who were impressed with the planning and skill of the Kennedy political machine in the Presidential campaign of 1960, the Congressional session of 1961 came as a violent shock—and one that is still only half appraised. Even others who, like the present writer, believed the Presidential campaign was an uncreative and indifferent performance, were still surprised by the desultory and unskilled—I had almost said amateurish—handling of the Congress which followed.

The President today has no solid bloc of support in either House of Congress. He cannot count on the right, the center, or the left. The outcome of every issue he presents to the Congress is dependent on an individual crystallization of interests and outlooks.

The time has not yet come to write the full history of this development. He who

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attempts it today must batten on betrayal of individual confidences. And all the materials are not in one hand. But the outline is clear.

Where the New Frontier has fallen short most comprehensively in the Congress is in giving the ordinary Democratic Senator or Congressman a sense of participation. The rank-and-file Democratic legislator does not feel that he is *in* the New Frontier—much as he might welcome being in, and much as he will profess, in public, that he *is* in. He was never invited. President Kennedy is substantially as distant from him as was President Eisenhower. The legislator feels the constitutional separation of powers not as a theorist's simplification but as a painful reality. The executive departments do not ask for his views; they try to badger him into voting for measures they have formulated quite without him. The high-level bureaucrat is often closer to the President than is the ordinary Congressman.

When the White House or an executive agency does infrequently consult the Democratic Senator or Congressman who is not a titular committee chairman, it does so in an atmosphere of the perfunctory and conventional. The legislator is not a member of the Democratic family that is running the government, though he may try to convince the voters in his home district that he truly is. When the executive does belatedly send someone to solicit his vote, it commonly sends men without authority and who do not understand the business in hand. These lightweight spokesmen for the executive branch come each visibly charged with a mission to build up the public reputation of the President, as well as to further his legislative program. But they are not equally mindful of the position of the Senator or Congressman. They do not invite his participation, build up his self-esteem, and show themselves considerate of his views, his reputation, and his political future. They have their own problems; he has his.

To such a Congress, at arm's-length in sympathies from the executive, the President came with two great requests for delegation of Congressional power. These were in farm programs and in foreign aid. In both cases a substantial bloc of members, in both Houses, were suspicious of the substantive ends for which the delegation would be utilized. (To my mind, these suspicions were largely justified for the farm programs, less justified in foreign aid.) But those who reject these farm and foreign programs, in substance, would not themselves have numbered enough votes to reject particular legislation. The dissenters on substance were joined by a large number of other legislators who, quite simply, did not like *any* delegation, since any would necessarily diminish their own effective authority.

The Congress of the United States does not desire to be a French or even a British Parliament. The powerlessness of the French legislators has been well advertised. And no Congressman who knows the facts—and especially not a Congressman in opposition—desires to exchange his personal role for that of a British Member of Parliament. Delegation is feared as meaning impotence. And even the Democratic legislator of the New Frontier does not feel that he is delegating power *to us;* he is delegating *to them*. He does not wish to do it. And no amount of calling him a reactionary can make him wish it more.

IT IS POSSIBLE to build great political strength on issues of principle. This is, of course, regarded as the flimsiest basis for political effectiveness by many who take themselves for men of the world. Yet principles are surely the strongest foundation of political strength where grave, moving, and articulate differences of principle exist. This ground was not available to the New Frontier.

It is also possible to build significant political strength on loyalty—party and personal—and on the pattern of working arrangements and expectations that flows

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from loyalty. But there hardly exists a national Democratic party (or a Republican one) to which to be loyal. Moreover President Kennedy chose the path not of strengthening his own party, and striving to increase its national character, but the other road of surrounding himself with Republicans, and he did so in a manner to suggest that he attributed little significance to the difference between Republicans and Democrats. He could not have it both ways. Party loyalty was not chosen as the cement of power. And, so far as personal loyalty is concerned, the White House, under all Presidents, has a deservedly poor reputation for that.

It is further possible to establish some political strength on personal affections or personal prestige. This avenue was, however, not open to President Kennedy in his relations with the present Congress. The affections do not exist. The prestige is one of office—not person.

Lastly, it is surely possible to build effective, continuing political strength on a basis of interests. But, for that, the affected interests have to be deep-seated and challenged, or at least in structured conflict with other interests. No such position exists in the New Frontier.

Lacking a continuing foundation in principle, loyalty, prestige, or interest, it is feasible to establish only fragile and temporary collocations of power. These collocations are formed, collapse, and are then re-formed, like dry sand-castles on a beach. Such were the alliances of the Congressional session of 1961.

III The High Doctrine

Pragmatism is a high-sounding word Americans use to denote the absence of a philosophy. Pluralism is a high-sounding word they use to denote the absence of a politics. The custodians of doctrine in the New Frontier call themselves pragmatists and pluralists. Clearly they mean to do what is good. But what do they mean to do?

For an exposition of the high doctrine of the New Frontier, one turns first naturally to Mr. John Kenneth Galbraith. He is by far the most considerable of the New Frontier's general theoreticians. But he has not made the search easy. He did produce a little book in the summer of 1960. Bearing the name *The Liberal Hour,* it was commonly expected to be a philosophical pamphlet on the public issues of the election. But it was not that at all. Mr. Galbraith did indeed identify certain public issues—urban squalor, unemployment, war industry, and inflation. On one of these, unemployment, he shifted ground significantly from the position taken in *The Affluent Society.** He wrote a delightful essay on "The Build-up and the Public Man" and a searching one entitled "Was Ford a Fraud?" But he hardly discussed any general public issue, except the untimely one of inflation, in greater depth than is common in a daily newspaper. *The Liberal Hour* turned out to be an hour for a mellow, relaxed, meandering walk in a pleasant New England countryside.

The task of exposition of the high doctrine, in a responsible political context, therefore fell to Mr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and this was perhaps fortunate. Mr. Schlesinger is simple and, on the surface, clear. He wrote an important paper,† and one that deserves to be more widely read. Its authority is also perhaps somewhat enhanced by the fact that Mr. Schlesinger subsequently became an assistant to President Kennedy.

Schlesinger begins by invoking Goldsmith: ". . . wealth accumulates, and men decay." And Emerson: "Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind." Clearly this cannot be tolerated. "The editor, the professor, the writer, the intellectual, the community leader all have to till the

* Compare the import, tone, and temper of *The Affluent Society,* pages 292 ff. with *The Liberal Hour,* pages 18–19 and 63 ff.

† "The Big Issue," in the *Progressive* of September 1960.

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ground." What is the trouble? "For one thing," says Mr. Schlesinger, "the American people are growing restlessly aware that the United States is losing ground in the world competition with the Soviet Union." And there is also a ". . . second source of our anxiety—the spreading awareness that we are even falling behind in making adequate provision for the welfare and opportunity of our own people and for the future of our children and thus of our nation." Due to this falling behind, "The whole quality of our national life is threatened by deterioration."

What shall we do then? We must, says Mr. Schlesinger, change "the *allocation of resources.*" We need to move away from individual consumer spending on "gadgets and gimmicks" because these "overwhelm our bodies and distract our minds." Less money should be spent on "private indulgence" and more on "public need." And Mr. Schlesinger reels off a long list of essential "social overhead," which includes ". . . education, medical care, housing, slum clearance, urban and suburban planning, social security, provision for the sick and the aging, roads, recreation, water, assistance to distressed classes and areas, resources and energy development. . . ." And he is far from finished, because he adds: "Do we need to put more resources in our missile program and in our conventional warfare capability and in the contest for space? The Soviet Union, a much poorer nation, has three times as many intercontinental missiles and three times as large an army and is outstripping us in the stratosphere. . . ."

Huge demands, surely, these of Mr. Schlesinger? No. Not at all. For, when the chips are down, Mr. Schlesinger, on this New Frontier too, will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; he will roar you as 'twere any nightingale. He requests, all in all, and for everything, civil and military, only 2 per cent or 2.5 per cent of the national product. (This is far less than the decline in military spending alone between 1953 and 1960.) "All that is involved," Mr. Schlesinger tells us, "is a *marginal shift* of resources—say some $10–12 billion a year more to be employed for public purposes. Such a shift in resources can *easily be achieved* within the framework of our present economic and political order. It would entail *no interference* with the existing freedom of investment or of entrepreneurial decision or of consumer choice." (Italics mine.)

Then why has it been necessary, as a preamble, to invoke God and His holy angels? But the best is yet to come. Mr. Schlesinger knows a "painless way" to find the needed $10–12 billion. It is "to pursue a policy of economic growth" up to the level already achieved under Truman. So, all the gadgets and gimmicks, which we thought we were to lose, are right back! Now that the game is played out, ". . . we can begin to do what must be done in the public sector and have continuing improvement in the standard of living at the same time." And the true faith, and loaves, and fishes.

Yet, after once going through the whole cycle of inflating this balloon and then himself puncturing it, Mr. Schlesinger cannot refrain from returning again to the same heroics: "The choice is stark and imperative: either a continuation of self-indulgence along these lines of least resistance, until we drift into minor-power status and oblivion, or a recovery of national purpose and an exercise of national leadership."

My cup runneth over.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S programs* have hitherto remained well within the modest limits traced by this high doctrine. Of course the administration's activities do show changes during the year. In general, the military component rises steadily. The space program was enlarged spectacularly on May 25, 1961, when the President put before the Congress, in joint

* A useful compendium is *President Kennedy's Program,* Congressional Quarterly Service, Washington, 1961.

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session, his request for greater expenditures aimed at putting an American man on the moon. (It was guessed by some that this enterprise would involve something like $20 billion during a decade.) At the same time the President was deciding that he would deny administration support—on the ground that there was no money—for a bill proposed by some members of the Congressional "left" to provide $1 billion for assistance in financing municipal and state public works. And, in general, President Kennedy has not put forward larger programs than those sponsored in the first weeks of office except in military affairs and space.

But, always and running through everything, there is the characteristic New Frontier polarity of portentous general language and modest specifics. Only let a speech begin, "The trumpet summons us again," and we can be sure we are being called to wash our hands. The White House does not escape the tone of café society, yet it strives for the demeanor of Churchill during the Battle of Britain. How Churchill is envied his "toil and tears, sweat and blood"! The Washington leadership of the New Frontier has an appetite for sacrifice—in comfort. St. Anthony wishes to suffer temptation—on the cobbled, shaded streets of Georgetown.

IV Welfare Legislation

In appearances, President Kennedy fell down badly, in this first year, in welfare legislation—especially in health and education. At least, that is the view of outsiders generally sympathetic to the administration. I myself am not sure. I have heard two dozen fragmentary stories on this failure. But I am not sure that the inner circle of the White House takes these defeats tragically. And I do not have an opinion on how much of the result was due to lack of political skill, how much to omission of timely work, and how much to absence of enthusiasm. Nor am I able to apportion the responsibility, as others do with conviction, among the White House, Secretary Ribicoff, and the administration's high command in the Congress.

For the unemployed, the New Frontier brought no change. At the President's request, Congress passed a Bill (H.R. 4806, approved March 24, 1961) duplicating Eisenhower's legislation in 1958. It provided federal advances to permit states to extend unemployment compensation for a maximum of 13 weeks. Under this program, in the six months of April through September 1961, less than six out of every ten unemployed persons have been receiving benefits. The others have exhausted their benefits or are ineligible. The average payment—to the six who are getting anything at all—is just over $30 a week.

Fulfilling a campaign pledge, the President made the passage of Distressed Areas legislation one of his first items of attention. A bill was passed (Senate 1, approved May 1, 1961) providing $394 million for loans and grants, available during four years. It has been of no consequence this year and will amount to little in the future.

An extremely complicated minimum wage bill was passed (H.R. 3935, approved May 5, 1961). Riddled with exceptions and qualifications, it generally increases the minimum applicable for enterprises in interstate commerce, by steps, to $1.25 per hour. The steps take to September 1963 for most enterprises but up to September 1966 for some. Tens of millions of workers in local and service enterprises remain uncovered. I can testify, of personal knowledge, that, in Washington, D.C., grown men, working full time in luxury apartment houses, now are paid less than $35 a week.

In retirement benefits under social security, the administration asked for little and received somewhat less (H.R. 6027, approved June 30, 1961). Representative was the action on the minimum retirement benefit, where the administra-

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tion asked for an increase from $33 to $43 *per month,* and Congress agreed to $40. Equally representative was the treatment of a widows' benefit, where the administration asked for an increase from 75 per cent to 85 per cent of the benefit due the deceased husband, and Congress agreed to 82.5 per cent.

On major health measures, the Congress did nothing. The President delivered a thoughtful, minimalist message already on February 9. It stressed two issues: health insurance for the aged and financial assistance for medical education. Speaker Rayburn expressed his benevolent inclination. But the House of Representatives did not move.

In the end, a similar fate befell the whole administration program on education. There again the President sent the Congress a thoughtful message, this time on February 20. But the House of Representatives did not go even as far as under Eisenhower. On May 26, 1960, the House had passed, by a majority of 206 to 189, a $325 million bill for school construction. This time they passed nothing.

But President Kennedy did not call the Congress into joint session to hear his views on the urgency of federal government action for the unemployed or for medical care or education. That high spectacle was reserved for shooting the moon. The unemployed, I fear, did not interest any effective political force in American society. But clearly those minimum needs in health and education for which the President wished to provide did hold wide public appeal. The President's programs would have added, from federal funds, perhaps 4 per cent to the $50 billion which the American people now spend annually on health and education. The amount is small. Nevertheless the aged in need of medical care would have been deeply interested. The medical students and schools would have listened. No one concerned with education and its finance could have been indifferent. But the President chose the path of more reticent action. These measures in education and health policy are therefore preserved as the daily bread of political controversy. They can be served up, in various forms, in the Congress of 1962 and in the Congressional election of 1962. Who knows, perhaps they will be preserved for the Presidential election of 1964?

V Economic Accomplishment

When President Kennedy took over in January 1961, about one American wage earner in every ten was totally unemployed. In October 1961, approximately one in ten was still totally unemployed. Gradually, the significance of this gross fact seeps around the world. No retouching of the national image is equally important.

According to the official statistics, the share of the civilian labor force that is unemployed has hovered all year around 6.8 per cent or 6.9 per cent. But these figures are quite misleading to the inexpert. They include in the divisor (the civilian labor force) perhaps 20 million people or more, out of a total of about 72 million, who do not contribute significantly to the dividend (the unemployed). First, there are perhaps 10 million unincorporated businesses in the United States;* their proprietors are not among the unemployed, but they are included in the 72 million civilian labor force. Second, there is a large group of senior salaried employees—in private business and in government—among whom there is almost no unemployment at any time, but they are also in the 72 million. It is not suggested that these 20 million or more be removed from our statistical measure of the labor force. But, if we are to be attentive to social and personal realities, we must look into the meaning of the

* *U.S. Business Tax Returns,* U.S. Treasury, Publication No. 438 (1961) shows for 1958 some 8,800,000 sole proprietorships, 954,000 partnerships, and 990,000 corporations. I wish I could induce sociologists and political scientists to read this fascinating publication.

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statistics we bandy about. We must be mindful that there are both owners and salaried groups who do not participate significantly in unemployment. All the actual unemployment is shared by another, narrower number of people.

The unemployed are, of course, in our time, special people. (How different all this is from the 1930's!) The rest of us have hemmed ourselves in, principally by property or seniority, against unemployment. The non-white are unemployed twice as frequently as the white. The unskilled blue-collared worker is unemployed six times as frequently as the white-collared worker. The man above forty-five is more frequently unemployed than the average. But obviously the man over forty-five who is unemployed is not a success. Few successful people will know him.

The New Frontier has adopted a perspective on unemployment which is perhaps to be expected in a period when the unemployed are special people. In 1900 through 1929, and again in 1946 through 1960, unemployment averaged about 4.5 per cent of the civilian labor force. These averages, of course, included good years when unemployment went down to 2 per cent and very bad years when it shot up over 7 per cent. Now, in March 1961, the new Council of Economic Advisers of the Kennedy administration had to put forward a set of economic plans. The three professors of economics who constitute the Council made a joint statement which is important as reflecting a mentality and a style of work. What did they have to say about unemployment? "An unemployment rate of 4.0 per cent is taken as a reasonable target for full utilization of resources. . . ."* Where 4.5 per cent is the historical average, 4 per cent becomes the target. So severely demanding are the titular Economic Advisers of the New Frontier.

* *The American Economy in 1961: Problems and Policies*, Statement of the Council of Economic Advisers before the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress, March 6, 1961, page 326.

In monetary policy, the Kennedy administration has accomplished one of its two objectives. These were, first, to keep short-term interest rates high and, second, to reduce long-term rates considerably. With the harmonious cooperation of the Treasury, the Reserve System, and the private banks, the administration accomplished its first objective. The yield on three-month Treasury bills was 2.302 per cent in January 1961 and 2.325 per cent on October 24. The commercial bank "prime" rate for short-term business loans was held up at 4.5 per cent. Success. But long-term rates were not brought down. Moody's average corporate bond yield was 4.65 per cent when President Kennedy was inaugurated and 4.72 per cent on October 26. Treasury long-terms (for example, the '78–'83s) rose from 3.87 per cent to 4.04 per cent. Failure. And the failure was entirely predictable as soon as the financial community learned—as it did very early—that the President was unprepared to enter into combat with the great forces resistant to his early general declarations of monetary policy.

In tax legislation, almost nothing has been accomplished. The Ways and Means Committee did not even report to the House the key measures which the administration proposed. These consisted partly of measures of additional tax severity—particularly related to taxing income earned abroad: there was no reforming zeal or push for these, and they were easily set aside. But the administration also proposed corporate tax *reductions*, estimated to reduce yields by about $1.7 billion annually, and these also were received coldly. The administration called its proposal one of ". . . tax incentives for the modernization and expansion of private plant and equipment." In substance, the proposal was to concentrate tax "incentives" on new or rapidly expanding firms and in industries employing large amounts of fixed capital. To minimize transparent absurdity, those activities employing *most* fixed capital—utilities, resi-

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dences, apartment houses, and hotels—were excluded from the benefits of the bill! The President argued ". . . the [tax] investment incentive itself can contribute materially to achieving the prosperous economy. . . ." In so arguing, he was adopting a point of view now frequently held among American economists but for which, I believe, there is no real evidence nor any force of logic. In any case, the business community was not interested. What it wanted, what it expected, was a general reduction in rates of tax on profits and on larger personal incomes. It was not going to be fobbed off with any trifling substitute.

In balance of payments matters, nothing fundamental has changed. There was no occasion for the Eisenhower-Anderson-Dillon panic in the winter of 1960–61. There was equally no basis for the public self-congratulation in which President Kennedy indulged, so prematurely, earlier this year, when a trickle of gold inflow replaced, for a time, the gold outflow. There is also no ground for a new wave of panic now that the gold outflow has resumed and the U.S. monetary gold stock (October 24, 1961) is some $466 million *below* its level at the end of 1960. The United States *does* have a balance of payments problem. American private foreign investing and U.S. government foreign spending, taken together, are a little heavy for our export earning capacity. The widening of the European Common Market will create additional difficulties. Our representatives in reciprocal trade negotiations have not achieved that degree of access for U.S. exports to the markets of developed countries which our volume of foreign investing and foreign spending requires. In all this, there is no irretrievable damage done and no occasion for great concern—except one. The cause for concern is that the New Frontier has shown no spark of new thinking regarding the United States policy on trade and tariffs or on the appropriate American attitude toward exclusive common markets in developed countries. The mind of Cordell Hull still sits at the conference table.

IN THE THIRD quarter of 1961, the gross national product of the United States was running at an annual rate of about $526 billion. This was an increase of some $15 billion over a year earlier, when measured in constant 1960 prices. The increase in output is rather less than the year's growth in the national productive capacity. At full employment, the national product would probably now be in the area of $600 billion.

To some extent, the United States is now recapitulating the experience of a decade earlier. But there are also great differences. Government spending, at all levels, was already running $11.6 billion higher in the third quarter of 1961 than a year earlier. But military spending was barely beginning to rise. And business expenditure on plant and equipment has not reached levels in 1961 that were attained even five years earlier. Moreover, short of the outbreak of a large non-nuclear war, there is no prospect of such a $20 billion increase in military expenditure as took place in a single year from 1950 to 1951. It may even be that, with respect to public expenditure, the administration of President Kennedy will be more inhibited by conventional thinking regarding budget balancing than was the administration of President Truman.

A decade ago, military expansion drew two million additional men into the armed forces in three years (1949–52); nothing like that is to be anticipated. Then a scramble took place to enlarge supplies of materials; today steel, copper, aluminum, petroleum, and all basic chemicals are in heavy surplus supply. Then there was a great deal of fabrication of conventional weapons and a drive to "stockpile" materials to enable World War II to be fought again; that will not be done still once more. These are great differences. Yet one basic similarity remains: at the

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close of 1961 the American economy is again being impelled forward primarily by the growth of military expenditure.

VI Foreign Affairs

President Kennedy let pass without initiative the great opportunity of his first week of office: to repudiate the stultifying doctrines of recognition lodged in American public policy by Woodrow Wilson and Henry L. Stimson: to reconfirm the old sound principle of the recognition of all *de facto* governments: and to declare for the universality of state membership in the United Nations. He would then have done in reason what he cannot now do under threat.

The Communist China of the Asian mainland and the trumpery People's Democracy of Eastern Germany are two gross political facts. We are not called upon to approve of them. But the United States gains nothing by failing to recognize them. The foreign policy of a mature people will acknowledge that there are evils beyond its remedy. But it will know even them and speak even to them, as it must live with them. And a foreign policy worthy of a mature people will acknowledge also that there are other evils that can be reached and remedied—it may be through study, understanding, and accommodation; it may be through resistance, force, and violence. In these situations too there will be no use for the powder-puff of non-recognition. Regrettably, in these matters, the New Frontier has not advanced beyond its inheritance.

Does the New Frontier have a distinctive foreign policy? White House strategy is always to concentrate attention on the President as responsible director of international affairs. This emphasis unifies. It elicits the widest serious public support attainable immediately. And it helps, in time, to stamp the President personally as the symbol of the nation. He then becomes *our* President—the right President, among other things, for us to re-elect. He speaks for *us*. But what does he say? Does he say only that policy must ". . . blend whatever degree of firmness and flexibility which are necessary to protect our vital interests. . ."?* Or does he say something distinctively different from what Dwight Eisenhower said? Or Harry Truman? And in what does this difference consist?

President Kennedy seems aware that the content of his foreign policy remains unknown. At Chapel Hill, in October, he responded, somewhat defensively: "We cannot open all our books in advance to an adversary who operates in the night, the decisions we make, the weapons we possess, the bargains we will accept . . ." Unfortunately this amounts to little more than, "Trust me." And, after Laos and Cuba, the President had not accumulated a great credit account of trust. Regarding Laos, a verbal belligerency made itself heard immediately after inauguration and then was slowly dissipated, in step after step of disorderly retreat. Regarding Cuba, three months after inauguration, the President was apparently incapable of interrogating the key sources of evidence and determining that there was no revolutionary situation. He seems also to have been unable to examine the plans for the miserable expedition to the Bay of Pigs and to determine that these were not plans for a serious revolutionary undertaking. When the operation collapsed, he sought comfort and immunity from criticism in the company of MacArthur and Hoover, Eisenhower and Nixon. These things do not reassure.

Failing direct evidence from Mr. Kennedy, there is a natural tendency to take as the views of the administration the statements of its more accredited representatives. Mr. George F. Kennan—is he not U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia?—is the most frequently cited in Europe and especially since his recent judgments on

* Address at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, October 12, 1961.

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coexistence with the Soviet Union were given wide currency by being re-published in the London *Observer*.* But I do not believe it is fair to charge the Kennedy administration with Mr. Kennan's more sanguine views regarding the potentialities of accommodation with the present Russian leadership. Similarly, Senator Fulbright may be taken by many, all over the world, to have been speaking for the Kennedy administration recently—is he not chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee?—in advocating the crystallization of international organization around an "inner community" of the North Atlantic nations, which is then fatuously joined to an "outer community" of the remaining non-Communist countries in a combined "concert of free nations."† But I do not believe that it is fair to charge the New Frontier with so simple a picture of the world.

The administration of President Truman was the creative period of our recent foreign policy. Eisenhower, at best, carried on what he found. And Kennedy, so far as the public knows, has as yet improved on Eisenhower only in eloquence. He has continued the Eisenhower practice of going-it-alone in Southeast Asia. (Who can take seriously a SEATO from which not only India but even Japan is absent, and for which the U.S. is the only actor?) He seems also to have fallen into a pattern of acting alone frequently in regard to Berlin, where the three occupying powers (Britain, France, and the U.S.) are not continuously in action together but often the U.S. by itself.

THE GOVERNING FACT of United States foreign policy today is that of selective, multiple associations. It is, I believe, desirable that this multiplicity of associations continue to be the governing fact of our policy, and that our many associations be variously strengthened in scope and in community of decision-taking. But, for such strengthening to become possible, our wavering practice needs first to emerge from incoherent daily improvisations to the consistency of clear, conceptual understanding and articulate, studied principle. We need to appreciate, quite self-consciously, what we are doing. Perhaps the beginning is to stop playing that old, cracked record which recites that the United Nations (or Atlantic Union or a Western Hemisphere Federation) is the last, best hope of man.

The Kennedy administration can certainly not be charged with great reliance on the United Nations.** And surely, in this, its position is basically sound. To attempt to carry out the foreign policy of the United States primarily through the UN is to perform an act of comprehensive abdication. What we can do through the United Nations is far less than we are obliged to do in the whole circle of our international relations, which must include many closer and more effective—though less universal—associations. The UN is now paralyzed, for many purposes. Its Communist members seek persistently to extend their system, as opportunity affords, and they consequently clash constantly with the other great group of powers that seek to support and strengthen non-Communist societies. This clash does not reflect some secondary deficiency of intelligence, skill, or ingenuity. And it is not alleviated by pointing to the fact that both sides have common interests—especially the paramount interest in preserving human life on earth.

For the United States, any one association other than the United Nations can also serve only as a partial instrument of

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* See *Russia and the West* (1961), especially the last chapter and its telling rebuttal by Mr. Leonard Schapiro in *The New Leader* of May 15, 1961.

† "For A Concert of Free Nations" in *Foreign Affairs*, October 1961.

** On the other hand, it may perhaps be charged wtih having used the UN too little for those limited purposes where greater use was possible. The case for larger possibilities is explored with great discrimination by Mr. Benjamin V. Cohen in his Oliver Wendell Holmes Lectures, *The United Nations* (1961).

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policy. (And the New Frontier does, I believe, understand this.) The United States cannot now usefully join any exclusive federation or confederation. To which shall we adhere? Is the U.S. a Western hemisphere power? Our Western hemisphere friends will welcome the opportunity to be rid of our customs duties and quotas on lead and zinc, sugar and meat, but will they be glad to join a confederation where our mature manufacturing industries will obliterate their infant industrial enterprises? Or shall we federate with Western Europe? What will we then say to Latin America, or to Japan, or to the less developed countries of Asia and Africa? Will these less developed countries be grateful for the privilege of forming an "outer community"—to quote Senator Fulbright's unhappy terminology—around our "inner community" of North Atlantic powers? With all modesty, without self-righteousness, with no claim of superior virtue, we have to recognize that the United States is a world power. The United States does not today fit into any regional federation or confederation. Diversity of circumstances and universality of interests combine to bar the way.

VII Fulfillment

It would be folly to add up the reckoning of the New Frontier at this time, put paid to the account, and close the books. These dry bones may yet live. Indeed, particularly in Washington, there is even now some trace of life: there are earnest people who would like to do something hard that is worth doing. But enthusiasm is—for the time—quite exhausted, and there are no indications of important unmatured novelties. What is distinctively lacking is a taste for fundamental and systematic thought. Imagination is always scarce and equally scarce really daring personality. I do not myself, therefore, see where the New Frontier will draw any great productivity. But I also do not believe it has been given me to see the future. The spirit bloweth where it listeth. As Mr. Kennedy has been elected President once, he is the more likely to be elected a second time. Seven more years!

Even those who comprehend only after the event can see now how pointless it was to draw an analogy between the New Frontier of 1961 and the New Deal of 1933. Ours is not a time of any great domestic stress. The effective voice of the American people was one of contentment in the Eisenhower administration. Richard Nixon merely failed—by the closest of margins—to establish his title as the legitimate heir. The human condition of America is not, in 1961, dominantly one of complaint or rejection or even dissatisfaction.

The people of the United States are aware that there is great stress and conflict in the world and that the United States is involved. But Mr. Kennedy was not chosen President on that account. The American people is fundamentally very trustful of its government in foreign matters. It would trust Mr. Nixon or Mr. Rockefeller, in office, as it trusts Mr. Kennedy. There are countries where a fiasco like Cuba costs somebody his political head (as Suez cost Eden's), but not in the United States. Only the grossest disturbance of public expectations regarding affairs outside the U.S. will have popular political consequences.

How characteristically American is the New Frontier! Look at the prophets of its High Doctrine. How small a gap separates these critics of the Affluent Society from the most devoted spokesmen for the affluence. Listen carefully, with ears tuned to the American language, as these prophets speak, and you will hear an old message: "Put your nickel on the drum, and save your soul. . . ." How often we Americans have wished to be saved, for a nickel.

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ALFRED KAZIN

AT EASE IN ZION

SEPTEMBER 1960

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD, that singularly clear mind, observed that even in Jesus' evasive "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's," one sees that the Jews had no independent state to govern; "the absence of such responsibility has been a characteristic of the Jews for centuries. That is one reason for their unpopularity."

We are certainly more "popular" now —especially with ourselves. A. and I came here in the plane of the Jewish state; under the great blue and white shield of David we rode the skies from New York to Paris to Rome to Lydda; and though even at twenty thousand feet some details, like a boiled chicken at dinner time, are all too familiar, "responsibility" puts them into a new setting and gives them a new look—as witness the immigration inspector at Lydda airport who in the exact duplicate of a British officer's uniform and a British officer's handlebar mustaches, makes little cracks in Yiddish to relieve the impatient, baggage-laden, and weary crowd. Even the local bobby-soxers running and squealing after Harry Belafonte in the slightly too posh hotel complete with pool remind one that Israel is now an established center of international show business—while Helena Rubinstein's splendid museum assures us that here, too, we have the *haute couture* of modern art. The blissful normality of *La Dolce Vita* in Hebrew! The established international hotel style that serves as well in Tel Aviv as in Caracas and Omaha! No wonder that Shimon V., the burly taxi driver outside our hotel who looks and talks like a barrel-chested Lancashire trade-union secretary, boasts to us that he never gets a foreign visitor into his cab without working on him to settle in Israel. He rides us around Tel Aviv shouting, roaring, and boasting about his conquests of Canadian businessmen in a tone that plainly says: "*I* am at home and *I* am normal! *We* are at home here and *we* are all normal! I am the most normal taxi driver in Israel and Israel is the only place for normal people!"

Smiling and at ease in Zion, Dr. Kaplan, head of the new, not yet opened, museum of antiquities in Jaffa, shows us around the first proud exhibits in what was once a Turkish prison. The squat pillars and high grated windows in this great vault must once have been as ominously full of shadows as one of Piranesi's prisons. But now the gleaming whitewashed walls bear neat museum placards identifying the friable clumps of earth and potsherds that can still be traced to ancient Israel. What meticulous and exhausting effort, what delicacy of touch and obstinate resolution to keep these shards and brown clusters of dirt from crumbling back into

ALFRED KAZIN, the well-known literary critic, recently edited a collection of contemporary essays for college use, *The Open Forum* (Harcourt, Brace & World). A new collection of his own essays, *Contemporaries* (which will include this and several of his other recent COMMENTARY pieces), is to be published early in the spring by Atlantic-Little, Brown. Among Mr. Kazin's other books are *On Native Grounds* and *A Walker in the City.*

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the anonymity of earth! Dr. Kaplan reads out the old Aramaic, Greek, and Latin inscriptions left in the stones, pillars, and roads. Starting from the bottom of recorded time, he reads his way up the ladder of Israel from Biblical times to the present. For though the present is of course not exhibited in this museum of antiquities, it is Israel today that has crowned and sealed the past as leading up to the State of Israel. And as we stand in what was once a Turkish prison and is now a museum, the obstinate Jewish insistence that history does have a design and purpose would seem to be confirmed by the fact that we are here, looking at the relics of ancient Israel dug out of the local soil. But Dr. Kaplan, charming and delicate-spoken man, is too absorbed digging up ruins and deciphering monuments to draw a moral and point a conclusion; he is preoccupied with the white lettering in the dim stone recovered with such effort from the earth. And closing shop to go home to lunch in his rattly old car, he points with his ignition key to the cellar below the museum, where through the grated window just above the ground we can see old people, on a special reclamation project, weaving cane-bottom chairs.

* * *

JAFFA, ANCIENT JOPPA, is now only a borough of Tel Aviv, and though there are fewer Arabs around than there must have been, the hovels built into the rock overlooking the Mediterranean are still plainly Arab. The old Arab quarter is a mass of ruins; "we had to blow up the houses because they were in a state of collapse and unsafe," the guide from the municipality gravely tells us, and gravely we look at each other. There can be no doubt that being in power eliminates many a doubt and a shudder. But my pleasure at finding so much normality in Israel is considerably enhanced as we make our way past a Moroccan whore with a Jewish star around her neck who is, the guide reluctantly admits, discussing last night's business with her greasy colleagues. The guide blushes but gamely translates to the end, adding the wistful comment that these "new elements" have brought Israel its first experience of prostitution. My constant sense in Israel that the rungs of history are still plainly marked in the stone comes back to me now as we go up and up the narrow winding staircases from the harbor. It was from somewhere below that poor old Jonah set sail for Tarshish. At each landing here, Jewish history gets a millennium more sophisticated. Consider that while at the bottom, in the old harbor that was Joppa, poor Jonah slunk aboard the ship from which he was to be flung overboard into the belly of the great fish, the landing above already has immoral Oriental bazaars openly trafficking in flesh, while above *that* is a vaguely beatnik night club, and above *that,* the studio of a German-born sculptor who works in abstract forms! These little cubicles built into the rock remind me of a Roman tenement, they are so deeply wedged into each other and the landings are full of the unending babble of people crowding into the open. But despite the cactus plants on the landings, the faintest possible tang of lemon and eucalyptus in the air, despite the shining blue Mediterranean everywhere in front of our faces, there is not a hint of the *dolce far niente, das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn.* The Arabs themselves look too much of the earth to be epicurean about it—their faces are the color of earth and look as neutral as earth. The Jews, of course, are not here to moon over the landscape; they are absorbed in higher things, crucial affairs of state, the everlasting life-and-death questions. So that even when I suddenly see cypresses on far-off hilltops and for a moment remember the Tuscan countryside, the white ashy powder left in the ruins of exploded houses and the sour smell of the rotting stone bring me back to where I am. You do not "relax" in Jaffa, you do not "enjoy"—the debris of time itself in this country (to say nothing of war and continued bitterness),

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the soft continuous breaking up of the stone into dust, is as obvious today as it was to Herman Melville in Palestine a century ago when he found that the Hebrew inscriptions on the tumbled heaped-up graves "can hardly be distinguished from the wrinkles formed by time." How old everything is in this land, and how unsparingly time itself stares us down from the wrinkled and jagged rock suddenly rising out of the sand.

* * *

SHRAGA FRIEDMAN of the Habimah players, driving us out to lunch in Herzlia with other members of the troupe, purrs over his new little car, his patrician-looking beautiful blond wife, his American guests, the gleaming seaside road to Herzlia. He has only recently learned to drive, and in this, as in other things, he is a new man, a Polish brand saved from the burning. He is alive and happy, he has worked his way across the world to Israel and up from the Habimah school to its regular troupe, with which he now tours every *moshav* and kibbutz in the country. As we sit at lunch, Shraga beams like the Sabbath. There is nothing stagey about him at all; with his round and plump bridegroom's smile, he could be anything but an actor, and his kindness and staidness remind me more of certain bashful Jewish mathematicians than of the actors I have known. Even the two older and well-known members of the troupe, Shimon Finkel and Aharon Meskin, look like the "quiet" uncles from out of town at the wedding feast. These are actors? Meskin, who had been waiting a bit too long in the lobby for us to arrive in Herzlia, smilingly admits that he's not too hungry, "took a little something at the house," while Finkel, whom I remember so well in the great Habimah production of *The Dybbuk,* reveals only in the quick observant turns of his eye the professional attention to gesture, the swift and mobile body which I recall from his slidings and cavortings around the stage in *The Dybbuk*. The Habimah is getting on—the old Habimah players are, and there is a placid hands-in-lap contentment about these prime actors that makes our pleasant lunch in the new hotel by the wide-shining sea, in the town named after the patron saint of Zionism, rather stiffer than I had expected of actors. It is all very pleasant, and just the faintest bit too formal—for though we *are* the "kinsmen," so to speak, from the other side, we haven't, after all, seen each other before, and as on all such visits, the family news is quickly exhausted. But as we get up from the table, Shimon Finkel comes up to me and proud to have just received it, shows me a letter from Gordon Craig enclosing a new photograph of the famous old theater director and designer. Gordon Craig is now eighty-eight years old, and in his long seclusion in Corbeil, in southern France, has been engaged in re-editing his works and in writing his memoirs. Off there in France, surveying the greatest theatrical experiences of his life, the famous son of Ellen Terry, the theatrical mystic *par excellence,* feels suddenly linked to Shimon Finkel in far-off Israel and has to tell him so—for of course the Habimah was one of the gratifying moments in his long and often bitter career.

And now Shimon Finkel has really something to talk to me about! No longer the slightly bored Jewish uncle dragged out to sit with company, he is the passionate man of the theater, and as he talks about Craig, his eyes light up, his fingers start to mold a half-remembered figure out of the past. Though he shrugs his shoulders as he remembers examples of Craig's well-known intransigence—after all, this is the visionary who gave up the theater as impossible, the absolutist of theater who said that "the *real* theater, the theater which is an art in its own right like music and architecture, is yet to be discovered and may not come for several generations"—you can see how touched and pleased Finkel is to have had this message from the still exalted theater name

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that is synonymous with experiment and the international art crusade of the past.

* * *

OF ALL THINGS to pick up again in Israel —Kafka's *Letters to Milena*. It was to this great love of his earlier life, to this extraordinary Czech patrician who, long after Kafka's death, was to be a prisoner and to save so many lives in Auschwitz, that Kafka once wrote—"In the evening I talked to a Palestinian Jew. I believe it's impossible in a letter to make you understand his importance to me—a small, almost tiny, weak, bearded one-eyed man. But the memory of him has cost me half the night." After all, as Kafka said on another occasion, "It is not necessary to fly right into the middle of the sun, but just to crawl to some clean spot on the earth on which the sun sometimes shines and where one can warm oneself a little." Kafka lived in a mental dungeon inside a ghetto that was inside the maze of ancient crazy Prague—but from the dungeon that was his neurosis as well as his genius, from the Prague where the Jews of modern times could no longer call up the Golem to help them, he asked just to crawl to a bit of sun and warm himself a little. The prophets of modern Israel, I venture to think, are not just the Zionist statesmen and the socialist statemakers, but also those artists and originals, like Kafka, who had in the endless exile of their own minds become small, almost tiny, weak, one-eyed men. They dreamed of the sun —and here is the sun. From my window overlooking the sea at Herzlia, where in the golden light the last swimmers are slowly coming in, shrugging the light-beaded drops of water from their shoulders, I seem to see not the usual health club, but Kafka and Babel, Modigliani and Rosa Luxemburg—all those Jews of whom Khrushchev has complained that "They are all individualists and all intellectuals. They want to talk about everything, they want to discuss everything, they want to debate everything—and they come to totally different conclusions!" And bent, one-eyed, tiny, they hear the new State of Israel: "Come to us and be happy at last."

Last night we were seated after dinner on the terrace of the hotel. X., of the Foreign Office, who had come out with flowers, rippled along in that standard British accent which among Israeli diplomats tends, like a waxed but defective Daimler, to stop short at the oddest moments. X. is a handsome fellow, accustomed to please, and purred along just splendidly until he came to the subject of the American poet, freshly divorced, who on his visit to Israel got off the plane complaining about his ex-spouse, and went from Dan to Elath telling everyone about his sufferings! X. was honestly shocked at so much raw American self-concern. To arrive in the Promised Land and talk only personal problems! It smacks of the vanities and fleshpots of the Diaspora. Sitting on this elegant terrace overlooking the sea and sipping cool drinks (the lights kept going out every five minutes, and our hosts groaned and apologized at each lapse as if the national honor were at stake), I could not help thinking that although all the literary people I've met in Israel admire the American writer and wistfully add that they've no one quite so brashly imaginative and wildly intelligent, he would never make it here. The anarchic force of his personality is just too strong and cuts through all the life lines of cousinship thrown out by the friendly new state. Yet just as Kafka's sisters live, or have lived, in Israel on the worldwide royalties accruing to his work, so I believe that eventually many people in Israel may live on the gifted and extreme individualists who have never seen Israel or who would never live here.

* * *

AT CAESAREA, along the Mediterranean, there is a fisherman's kibbutz. There are remains along the shore of a Crusader's fort—and just outside these empty stone

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shells, I saw some students from Ghana and young kibbutzniks taking turns riding a white horse. In the harbor, just outside the remains of the old sea wall and staircases, there rode at anchor the yacht of a wealthy scientist who has been digging for the treasures left in shipwrecked Roman ships. Further inland, deadly quiet among the sands, is a new excavation site where a Roman mosaic floor and several headless but regal statues have been uncovered. The deep quiet of the ancient past is absolutely uninterruptible here: even the minute rustling of grass in the hot wind adds to the intensity of a silence here which is more than the absence of sound. What unexpected ruins these are—where the very chalk letters on the walls of the fort, unless I am mistaken, say "Ben-Ari loves Miriam," and where though the rubbish in the corners of these deserted shells lets out the same sour smell of damp stone, these students from Africa wait to ride the kibbutz's white horse. None of the boys, not even the local girls bother with a saddle; and as they plod along the sandy ruts of the beach, the colors of the sea and the colors of the rigging on the ship and the intense, almost blue, blackness of the Ghana students on the white horse raise hot new colors against our eyes.

* * *

To BE A SMALL COUNTRY these days is to be at last in the center of things! At the HIAS hostel in Beersheba, I was struck by the group of young French engineers, in army shirts and chino pants, who were knee-deep in charts and blueprints, and I was touched to see, in the restaurant attached to the hostel, Walter Lowdermilk, the famous soil conservationist, who though past seventy and with so much work behind him in Israel, likes, I hear, to "hang around" still. I have been fascinated by the international gossip of Israeli officials who may change from Epstein to names more Canaanite-sounding but who can now reel off for you the exact mistakes American diplomacy has made in the Congo and give you the low-down on the damndest things in the Soviet Union. On the top level, at least, it is obvious that to be in charge of a small country intensely ambitious for technical development is to acquire a fabulous range of information.

Surely not much of this sophistication gets down to the mass of new arrivals in their special housing areas. But it seems to me that this inevitable division in small "backward" countries between the administrative elite and the submerged mass points up in Israel the traditional gulf between the patriarchs and the prophets, who with their special vision feel that they have been chosen by God and are answerable to God, and the poor old children of Israel who trudge grumblingly through the desert, from time to time are taken with false gods, and have always to be brought back sternly to the business of reaching the Promised Land—under the gifted leaders who are irascible with their charges, weary to death of these masses, but who have sworn to God to Finish The Job.

Shortly after the war I met on shipboard a relative by marriage of Chaim Weizmann's; his sense of personal superiority, especially on the subject of the Jews, startled and fascinated me; I guessed that it was borrowed. His pomposity was of the kind that you often find among dull men with advanced degrees, but his sense of irony about the Jews, coming from such a source, interested me. His conceit could not have been all his own; it must have reflected a more complex position, for he made you feel that he was reluctantly committed to "this peculiar people to whom we happen to belong." And in Israel I have come to understand why, of all the famous Zionist leaders past and present, only Chaim Weizmann has deeply interested me. For Weizmann, so gifted as a scientist and as a man who could charm even the British Foreign Office, evidently felt that like the infant Samuel he was pledged to the Jewish people. But just as Freud, so much more self-centered and

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less attractive a human being, sought to enlighten the humanity that he distrusted, so Weizmann, moving on the highest echelons of modern science and diplomacy, sought to raise up a people whom he often despaired of.

Weizmann is supposed once to have complained to Vladimir Jabotinsky that the Jewish masses were "the dust of the earth." And though Jabotinsky replied with moving appropriateness that "God made man out of the dust of the earth," it is obvious from many accounts of his personality that Weizmann, that first-class mind among Zionist leaders, felt that he had to stoop to the dust. At the Weizmann Institute in Rehovoth, where so many of Weizmann's relics and personal papers are exhibited, you can see how he longed for quieter pursuits but steadily pressed on through the fifty years in the desert of Zionist congresses and courting the English that it took to realize the Jewish state. Of course Weizmann loved the Jews; all his manifest charm and humor reflect his emotional participation in their lives. But more than the Jews he loved the Jew: the Jew's historic destiny, the Jew's idea of the Promised Land, the Jew's idea of himself as creatively and morally the advance-guard of humanity. So it was Chaim Weizmann's duty, as a scientist and national leader, to guide and instruct and reproach those whom God had chosen. It was the sacrifice of himself that he gloomily expected in the new state. But greater than the state was the historic promise and its task, and greater than the presidency of the state was his place among all the Jewish patriarchs who have guided the "children" to their appointed place. In his ironic and unceremonial way, this organic chemist was more consciously a believer in Providence than many a ritualist in the synagogue. But just as the patriarchs dwelt apart, so it was from the silken recesses of the Dorchester in London that Weizmann looked down to the trade-union activists who were actually making the new state. "What a bounder!" he is supposed to have complained of one cabinet minister.

In Weizmann's private study at the Institute, there are just two photographs on his desk. One is of Fritz Haber, who won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1918, was head of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, and invented the famous Haber Process for converting atmospheric nitrogen into ammonia and nitric acid that was so important to Germany in the First World War. The other photograph is of Richard Wilstaetter, who won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1915. Both were Jews who occupied the highest scientific posts in Germany and were thrown out by Hitler; both were constantly beseeched by Weizmann to settle Palestine, and both died in Switzerland—Haber was actually on his way to Palestine when he died.

These were Weizmann's particular admirations—and both these German Jews, so gifted, so dedicated to science and to Germany, so reluctant to embrace Weizmann's Zionism, must have seemed to Weizmann particular examples of the fate of intellect in mass society. For of course Weizmann found himself a mere figurehead of the new state, not consulted and not needed. And by contrast, it is surely for Ben Gurion's shrewdness and toughness, not for his pretentious and unreadable efforts to play the intellectual leader, that the prime minister of Israel is actually admired.

I would guess, from such interviews as I have had with the new Israeli administrative and scientific elite, that they have Weizmann's proud sense of expertise and of course Weizmann's passionate sense of duty to the people—without Weizmann's mystic sense of Jewish destiny or of the leader as necessarily lonely in his prophetic role. At the Weizmann Institute I picked up an account of Weizmann's last days significantly entitled *Hollow Glory,* by the Israeli newspaperman Samuel Shihor.* It is extraordinary to read Weizmann's re-

* Translated from the Hebrew by Julian L. Meltzer (Thomas Yoseloff, 256 pp., $4.95).

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corded observations to Meyer Weisgal—the dying man, speaking in his first language, in the Yiddish of the East European Jews, talked of the Jews with the bitterness of a father who has tested his sons and found them not altogether satisfactory. "My greatest difficulty in lying here in this helpless condition is to watch and see all the mistakes that are being made in this country. . . . The Jews are a small people, a very small people . . . but also a great people. An ugly people, but also a beautiful people, a people that builds and destroys. [A] people of genius, and at the same time, a people of enormous stupidity. . . . We can do a fine thing, a very fine thing, which can become an honor to ourselves and to the whole of mankind. But we must not turn it into an ugly thing. Because we are an impulsive people we mess things up and often we destroy that which has taken generations to build up. . . ." He does not flatter the Jews! He judges them as severely as did the prophets who saw in them the instrument of the divine purpose. Weizmann, who gave his life to the Jews, obviously felt, chemist and skeptic that he was, that he too spoke for God—that is, for the truth.

Where in this new Israel that Weizmann could be "president" of, but could no longer influence, is the leader with that kind of moral imagination—devoted to the vision of man's necessary future, not to just another national cause? Perhaps the times make it impossible. For the future is already here; everything predicted in purely material and external terms is clearly on its way. But it is exactly this unexpected realization of *all* the national causes and material hopes that makes the world so strange to Jews; Israel is now just another small country. Israel was re-established, but not until the cruellest and most apocalyptic pagan dreams of revenge against the Jews had been realized in the gas chambers. The Yemenites in great airplanes have returned to the Holy Land "on the wings of silver eagles," exactly as was prophesied in scripture. But the Mohammedan prophecies are also being fulfilled of a great new power for the descendants of Ishmael—while in Russia even old believers have found that the Communist theology has made their dreams for Russia come true. Soon each country in Asia and Africa and Latin America will have its Promised Land, its seat in the UN, and its own atom bomb. No wonder that in this age of redemption, amid the strange and literal fulfillment of so many ancient hopes and prophecies, it is hard not to sympathize with those who, unlike the great men who merely dreamed the future, now have to live in it. The unregenerate 19th-century prophets are now quite superfluous, but among the practical people running things, one looks for those who represent a more humane age without trying artificially to recapture it.

* * *

ONE OF THE most interesting people I have met here is Zalman Aranne, the former minister of education, and thus predecessor to Abba Eban. Aranne's accent is Russian, not Yiddish, and he *looks* Russian; in his stiff double-breasted suit and the rather stiff lecture over fruit and soft drinks with which he explained Israeli schools to us in his Jerusalem apartment, he retains the pedagogical Russian manner. Only a Russian could look so solemn while sipping a soft lemon drink through a straw, and at first, listening to Aranne on the educational problems of his country, I worried: was there an exam in this course? There was a charming young Sephardic Jew from Greece with him, a former assistant in the ministry, who would gracefully help out with a word whenever Aranne's English bogged down. The contrast between the ease of the assistant and the sternness of his old superior made me recall Matthew Arnold's lesson of the Hellenes and the Hebrews—except that this Hellene was a Hebrew and this particular Hebrew very much a Russian! I

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was interested to hear of Aranne's talks with visiting Soviet personalities—among them a group of sailors off a merchant vessel and a diplomat who noted icily that Israel spent in proportion far more on schoolchildren than the Soviets did. Aranne, who as a democratic socialist during the Provisional Government had enjoyed "the one period of absolute cultural freedom that the Russians have ever known," decided with the increasing repression of the early 1920's to leave for Palestine. He crossed the border in deep winter, wearing white to camouflage himself in the snow; at one point, dodging and hiding in the woods, he found himself eating an apple and laughing with joy as he said out loud to himself in the woods: "I'm going to *Eretz Yisroel!*" When he finally got there, he worked as a laborer on the Haifa docks, and then, gradually making his way up to the inner circles in the Histadrut and Mapam, eventually joined the cabinet as minister of education. I've heard, without being able to check it, that Aranne left this ministry to make room for Abba Eban's entry into Israeli politics. No doubt, as the pioneer generation of Russian-born Israeli leaders yields to the young sabras and the standard British accents, someone like Zalman Aranne will perhaps seem almost as old-fashioned in Jerusalem as he is in New York, and was long ago in Moscow.

But how the world will miss these fiery old Jews—and how I will miss them! Far from being the stiffly creaking Russian academic that at first I feared he might be, Aranne turned out to be the most intensely eager intellectual that I found in official circles. Our first meeting wasn't enough; we had to go on with it next day at dinner at the King David. In the great dining room I naturally looked around for British officers carrying swagger sticks and Sternists with bombs under their Arab cloaks; but Otto Preminger had hired them all to make *Exodus,* and all I could see was Miami Beach, complete to the mink stoles in the Near Eastern night. The only exception was a church group, just in from Jordan no doubt and on their way to Egypt, the lucky Methodists!

Aranne at dinner ignored them all; he even ignored the dinner, to the intense mortification of the headwaiter, who in his stiff shirt and swallow-tail coat may have to bring out the boiled chicken, but who does it with an air. Aranne looked at the mounting dishes with the most intense distraction in his noble eyes, and pushing everything away, implored us to send our children to Israel, not to cut ourselves off from the new, struggling, beleaguered Jewish state. He was interested in us; we were a brand *he* wanted to save from the burning. Naturally a Jew brought up in the old Russia thinks that his very survival depends on a Jewish homeland, and views with mistrust our old-fashioned and obstinate hope that the lion and the lamb may yet lie down together in our part of the world. But it is not a self-righteous patriotism that drives Zalman Aranne. He told us that one night during the "war of liberation," when the siege of Jerusalem was at its worst, he saw a soldier coming off duty and stumbling with fatigue down the streets. The soldier was loaded with tommy gun, hand grenades, bayonet, trench knife; he must have looked like a walking arsenal. Suddenly, to Aranne's amusement, there walked past the soldier an old, bearded, ultra-Orthodox Jew, probably from the Mea Shearim "quarter of fanatics," dressed in white stockings, caftan, and shiny furred hat. Many Israelis were shocked and disgusted by the refusal of these fanatically pious Jews to support the new state, and Aranne was annoyed to see the Orthodox Jew suddenly stop in front of the exhausted soldier and look him over from head to toe in the most condescending way. Then the old Jew said savagely and bitterly, dancing around the poor soldier in his rage—"*You're* the Messiah? You?"

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THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

THE GRADUATE STUDENT: A PROFILE

NOW THAT COLLEGE education is becoming a commonplace in American life, the graduate student seems to have preempted what novelty and prestige remain in being a student. In some ways he resembles that young intellectual hero of pre-World War II days, the boy who was working his way through college. Like him, the graduate student—particularly the Ph.D. candidate—is viewed by many people, including the more scholarly undergraduates, as a man of opportunities and purpose. He spends his days and nights on the frontiers of nuclear physics, or of learning theory, or of logical positivism. Sacrificing the opportunity to earn a good living for the sake of continuing his education, he works in a community of scholars and lives in the stimulating graduate student enclave, where young people are cheerfully poor together and one keeps up with the Joneses by reading Samuel Beckett. If the student is married, as he usually is, it is to a woman who shares in his purpose as she shares in his sacrifices; in some respects, she is a modern version of the American female pioneer—a young woman of enterprise and pluck, who types her husband's term papers while her infant naps, her cake bakes, and her laundry goes through the community washing machine. Or, advanced woman that she also is, she may be off taking a seminar of her own, while her husband rocks the bassinet with one hand and turns the pages of a Russian grammar with the other.

These images have been circulating ever since the veterans of World War II returned to "revolutionize" university life. One principal change that did occur was in the displacement of the formerly staid and monastic atmosphere of graduate school by a more robust intellectual, domestic, and egalitarian spirit, as large numbers of bright and irreverent ex-GI's —many of them the first members of their families to go to college at all—went on to work for advanced degrees while raising families in converted service barracks.

The new social pattern of graduate student life continued to prevail after the veterans had left campus. Increasing numbers of students now took advanced work as a matter of course,* either to improve their chances in an increasingly crowded and specialized job market or to prepare for careers in the academy itself. For the gifted children of families on the social or economic margins of the society, graduate school became one of the best ways to

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* According to Bernard Berelson's *Graduate Education in the United States* (1960) there were some 105,700 graduate students in 1940 and over 250,000 during the 1950's, nearly half of whom were doctoral candidates.

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move up, and the names of the top departments became familiar and magical, like the names of the medical schools. Meanwhile the campus continued to be a domicile of early marriage and parenthood. Thus, when one of the national weeklies took its readers into university seminars and student housing, they would find an alert-looking cross-section of American facial types preparing to meet the challenges to the free world, and serious young couples gazing thoughtfully into the future at the end of an evening. Furthermore, the new intellectual spirit that the veterans had produced was presumably being sustained by the much-discussed influx of writers, artists, and other non-academic types who were finding their way to university careers, and by the more open relationship generally between the academy and the society.

Recently the image of the graduate student's favorable situation—a seemingly normal life-style joined to an aura of heightened possibilities—has received a good deal of support from a leading sociologist, Bernard Berelson. In his book, *Graduate Education in the United States,* he concludes that the students themselves believe both their academic and private lives to be gratifying. Who should know better? Questioning his sample of recent Ph.D.'s, Berelson found that "on the whole they were quite satisfied with their social life as graduate students," that most of them had completed their degrees out of "academic" rather than "practical" motives, that the five or six years or more spent earning the degree was not too long, that their dissertations were worth the time and labor they had put into them, and so forth. In sum, 35 per cent of the group reported they were "very satisfied" with their experience generally, and 53 per cent said they were "satisfied." Of the handful of malcontents—about one out of ten—Berelson judged that their grievances were probably related to their dissatisfaction with the academic posts they had been given for their labors.

NOW THE popular attitudes I have been caricaturing do not penetrate very deeply into the actualities that seem to me to characterize the world of the graduate student today; and like Lewis A. Coser, who reviewed Berelson's book in COMMENTARY (March 1961), I have a distinct sense of unreality when Berelson describes and evaluates this world largely by means of the responses of people who have successfully completed their graduate work. This is rather like describing how Americans feel about military service on the basis of what the members of a veterans' organization might say about life in the army. In both cases there is a vested interest in expressing satisfaction and a summary sense of personal history. At the veterans' club it takes the form, "I went in a boy, I came out a man"; at the faculty club, it is likely to be phrased, "As an undergraduate I was a dewy-eyed impressionist, but when I took my doctorate I had a disciplined mind."

At the same time my own years in graduate school* lead me to believe that the dissatisfaction which Coser (a professor of sociology at Brandeis) finds among his students and the "strong vote of approval" which Berelson's all-rightniks give to the institution are not irreconcil-

* Most of the following is based on an awareness of what life is like in three graduate schools usually listed among the top five in the country. What I have to say is perhaps less true of the less prestigious and high-pressured schools, though many of these schools are currently expanding in size and ambition, and their models are likely to be the more famous universities. Also the kind of graduate student I have in mind is someone in the humanities or social sciences, rather than in the natural sciences, which tends to be a world of its own, though not very different in respect to the student's relation to his work and to his private life from what I shall describe. It should, finally, be noted that I shall be describing only one type of student, though one whose progress has, I believe, a good deal of general reference. For an excellent typology of contemporary graduate students, as well as a remarkably sensitive treatment of their problems, see Edgar Z. Friedenberg and Julius A. Roth, *Self-Perception in the University.* Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 80 (University of Chicago Press, 1954).

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able. Rather, these opposing reactions often represent stages in a subtle process by which even the fiercely critical students slowly and ambiguously sign on with the system in order to fight their way through it. For all the talk about the revolution in university life, about its new role as a creative center in the society, this painful conforming to academic attitudes and scholarly methods, with resulting gains and losses, still characterizes, it seems to me, graduate education in America; and underlying the process, is often the quiet and deep desperation of the student's private life.

TO UNDERSTAND the experience of graduate school, it is useful to begin with the contrasts ordinarily encountered between undergraduate and graduate training. For the sake of the argument, let's take a bright, if somewhat wayward, student in a good liberal arts college; after two desultory years of general education he is still undecided about his vocation, and in his junior year drifts into an honors program. What he will probably find is that there is no longer any "horsing around": work is piled on, the standards are rigorous and professional. For a while he resents the tougher demands made on him, but in time begins to respond to the challenges—to the note of seriousness in his class lectures and discussions, and to the illuminations of his instructors, who are likely to be top men, dedicated to their program and unwilling to suffer fools gladly. Under their influence, the student begins training himself to read, to write, and to think. As part of a strict but rational program, taught by men with a stake in teaching, he finds himself engaged in his work, and sees that most of his fellow-students are similarly engaged. A strong sense of community almost inevitably develops. Faculty supervision is apt to become more benign and informal as the student demonstrates his seriousness, and friendships often follow, especially with the younger teachers in the program. Under the direction of one of these young teachers the student starts reading for his honors essay, having been led to a subject that really interests him—let's say, "The Modern City as Viewed by Dickens and Marx." During his final months of intensive reading and writing, he begins to feel at home in the library and more comfortable with scholarly method. His stubborn prejudice for contemporaneity dissolves, as he finds himself living in the Victorian London of his imagination as excitingly and perceptively as in his courses and in his conversations on campus. The campus has by now become a very satisfying place to be. The charm of research and of the past, together with a sense of vocation settle upon the student. After receiving his B.A. he moves on to a famous university to do graduate work, bearing with him his fantasy of becoming an erudite teacher and writer.

On the face of it, the graduate school might be expected to be similar enough to the honors program our student has just left. His new group of M.A. candidates is presumably a select one; his program is demanding but again rational; his teachers are members of the graduate school faculty of a top-ranking institution, men of long experience and high standing in their fields. But the student, from the first day on, feels himself living in a radically changed atmosphere: any resemblances to his past situation seem mainly coincidental.

Undergraduate education is still largely "liberal education"; it provides, at its best, a curriculum and instruction proper to the training of the free man, that is, the man capable of thinking independently and critically about himself and the world; further, by its program of general and specialized education, it envisages the intellectual development of the whole man. Graduate education likes to say that its main purpose is the "training of teachers and scholars," but in practice, the "teaching function," as it is called, gets lost in the "research function." The most satis-

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fying vision of the graduate school is full production of functioning scholars. Indeed, were graduate schools to take seriously their own announced purpose, and prepare teachers fit for their own undergraduate colleges, they would be very different institutions.

Thus, while the undergraduate in a good college has the sense of being directed toward realizing his best intellectual possibilities, the graduate student finds himself part of an impersonal and often rigid orientation. The department's techniques, values, and needs of research are quickly placed between the student and his passion for the larger reaches of the subject matter. Other than that, he is left to fend for himself.* The student who was interested in Dickens *and* Marx *and* the modern city finds himself forced to choose one of the three and prepare himself to study Dickens or Marx or the modern city by the methods which conform to his department's canons of acceptable research.

The men who formulate these canons, and teach the three-year program of graduate courses, are likely to be the senior men of the department. Most of their professional attitudes naturally tend to have settled on the fixed base of their special academic interests, their annual offering of the same courses to more or less unresisting students, and their role in the department hierarchy. In general, as Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr. have suggested in *The Academic Mind* (1958), these older men are the conservative members of the department, inclined to exercise "a dampening effect on the innovating spirit" of their junior colleagues and certainly of their students. Members of the academic elite, they maintain the traditions and values summed up in the phrase "respectable research." The ideal of the advancement of scholarship, inherited originally from the German universities, still sets for them their standard of prestige and their purpose as educators. In practice, this can mean little more than working the treadmill of "scholarly opinion" in their specialty, and training students—when they think of the matter of graduate education at all—to do likewise. Now and then, one of them happens to be a wise and civilizing figure, even a powerful and provocative thinker or a rebel who has won his unconventional way—often through his prestige outside the academy. But the spirit of most graduate departments remains reductive and restrictive, and our entering student soon begins to feel that the large, benign world of his undergraduate honors program has given way to a system which in effect operates directly against the open and inward attitude toward learning that he had been encouraged to cultivate.

ONE WAY AND ANOTHER, he discovers that his attainments as an undergraduate are discounted. The courses he is now required to take may even seem designed for the express purpose of disabusing him of any pretensions toward creativity or sophistication; they work also to disabuse him of his enthusiasm and confidence. A key course, often titled "Principles and Methods of Research," will immediately lay upon his spirit the wet blanket of pious procedures and apparatus. Otherwise, the atmosphere is perfunctory and amorphous: the famous scholar he has come to study under turns out to be a supernaturally remote figure whose lectures are drawn from his books; the course that looked so fascinating in the bulletin he pored over all summer turns out to be taught by a cranky old man, who has been treading the same shallow waters for thirty years, or by a very intense young scholar, who conducts impressive monologues in a strange new jargon. Gone is the relaxed and inspiriting communication that our student once had with his undergraduate teachers; he moves, now,

* Or as the late Dean Woodbridge of Columbia is reported by Berelson to have once put the matter: "interest in the students (rather than the subjects) is the great temptation which tries the graduate school and the great obstacle to its success."

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in a world where such relations seem to him more like those between the townspeople and the officials in *The Castle*.

His first semester is likely to drag itself out in a succession of gray realizations. He may, at first, attribute his initial sinking feeling to being uprooted and lonely, but he soon perceives that some other students are as apathetic and resentful as he. With a shock, he sees himself in a mechanical process by which some fifty students are being run through the assembly line of an M.A. program. Classes seem divided—about evenly—between those who madly take notes during the hour and then hustle back to the library, and those who doodle or look vacantly out the window and then wander off into one of the coffee shops. He himself alternates between feeling intimidated and feeling contemptuous. Sometimes he envies the "stacks rats"—those fellow students who seem to have a consuming passion for bibliography and the language of "the learned journals." He becomes dull and disconsolate, wearing a path from his desk in one of the graduate reading rooms to his classes and back to his desk again. He begins to wonder if he should drop out.

But his situation does improve by the second semester. With a somewhat freer selection and with a knowledge of the faculty, he can line up one or two engaging courses. He discovers a few fellow students who manage to be intellectually independent and yet efficient in the ways of the department, and he takes heart. His social life picks up as he runs into some of the less stuffy manners and morals that exist on the margins of the university community. He goes to parties, meets girls, enters a circle of friends. He is more at home —and less hobbled to his role as a graduate student. But his relation to this role is likely to remain no less problematic. He still feels intellectually curbed. He comes upon a vital and provocative teacher but notices that, even so, there is little passion or controversy in the classroom discussions, and that a brilliant lecturer can speak for weeks without being asked a question. He himself is, to be sure, better able to imitate the attitudes and jargon that prevail in his field, but wonders what purpose they serve to anyone outside the academy. Now and then he pauses in the stacks of the library to thumb through a Ph.D. dissertation and thinks that some day he will have to write one. Reading the dreary learned journals in his field, he thinks that some day he will be forced to write for them—his career will depend on it.

Many students who are working for a Ph.D. give up at least once along the way. Often as not, the break comes at the end of the M.A. year. Some of the men go into the army; some journey out into the world to see what the other possibilities are, often in the belief that they will find there a healthy dose of "reality." What the ex-student usually discovers is that the universities these days have no priority on dullness or conformity. After the regimentation of the army or the corporation or the public agency, the venality of publishing or advertising, the intellectual inertia of teaching in a secondary school or a fourth-rate college, the graduate school can begin to loom in one's mind again as a place of meaningful effort. Such phrases as the "academic community," "intellectual honesty," "a meaningful way of life," begin to drift through the ex-student's mind and eventually he may surprise himself in the act of writing away for bulletins and enthusiastically making plans to go beyond his Master's, to get his Ph.D.

Let us then pick up our student who after a few years has decided to go back to graduate school again. And let us give him the additional typicality of having acquired a wife and a child or two.

CERTAIN THINGS now work to help him adjust. Having been once through the graduate school mill, he has few illusions to trip over. He is better able to accept the hard, gray facts of the Ph.D. program as part of the hard, gray facts of life,

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having seen that imagination or independence or intellectual ambition count even less outside the academy. The less extreme examples of academic triviality leave him indifferent—or cynical—rather than rebellious. Also, the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood make him less self-indulgent, more determined. The amorphousness, the uncertainty, of the first year of graduate work is replaced by a more definite set of norms—the alternatives, in line with the need to specialize, are fewer; and the department's standards of competence are more strictly imposed. Among the better students there is a more uniformly accepting spirit, a more committed academic stance.* Our student now sees before him a straight and narrow path and with whatever self-irony prepares to climb it. The major demand for accommodation, however, will come from outside his classes—from the daily struggle to meet the requirements for the Ph.D. as quickly and as successfully as possible, for behind the married student's academic situation usually lies the much more intense pressures of his private life.

THE GRADUATE student is typically self-supporting (unlike the student in a professional school like law or medicine who—as Berelson points out—generally receives financial assistance from his family). Unless he has a fellowship, he will have to devote half his time to some sort of job—usually either research or teaching. Most such positions that I am aware of range from $1,500 to $3,000 a year, which is also the customary range of fellowships in the humanities and social sciences. With the help of the GI Bill and later the Korean War Veterans Bill, some students could manage, but otherwise the economics that govern the world of the married student community are grim.

At the state universities the student loses a smaller proportion of his stipend in tuition but also finds that his job opportunities are more or less restricted to campus and to its exploitative wage scale. The main purpose of graduate student teaching is not to offer training and experience but simply to cut costs. Where there is a large freshman population, as at the state universities, the graduate student is used to provide instruction at one-half to one-third the cost. Similarly, smaller schools in a university area such as Chicago are able to hire a graduate student to teach four courses at a salary of $2,400 a year. Thus the usual teaching stipend will pay the graduate student only about $50 a week for nine months and leave him without any resources during the summer. At the private city-based universities such as Harvard, Columbia, and Chicago the student may find more lucrative part-time teaching at the other schools in the area (or may simply be free to teach more courses at the slave-labor rates), but this advantage is undercut by higher tuition costs and living expenses. Consequently, whether he has a teaching or research job or a fellowship, he is likely to end up at the same financial impasse.

The student can, of course, live on his $50 a week for several years; he can even support a wife and have another child and drive a used-up car. But a root-canal, a siege of flu, a burnt-out clutch, can precipitate a crisis and drive the student further into debt, and a major financial set-back can mean leaving school for a year. The expense of spirit is severe. The young couple's eager will to "make do" fades into the daily sense of slogging through a mire of difficulties. The "compact" or "cute" little flat in married student housing becomes a cramped, tense, depressing scene. Savings run out, and in

* Thus Friedenberg and Roth find that in their group of successful graduate students in the social sciences at the University of Chicago, "there is a remarkable correspondence between the officially stated purposes of the University" and those of the group, "between the consciously held attitudes and those deemed by the division to be appropriate." The authors find also that "only one of the nine individuals whose perceptions of the scholarly life were unique was declared by his department counselor to be successful. . . ."

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time the look of the veteran graduate student family shows—the male, drawn, tense, frayed at the cuffs; his wife, lean and a bit haggard in her uniform of blue jeans; and even the children looking the worse for wear.

Aside from financial problems, other pressures of the student's situation multiply as he advances through successive stages of course work, qualifying examinations, thesis. During the first two or three years his teaching or research job can be fitted into a more or less manageable schedule, depending on how skillful he is in cutting corners at each end. Also the rhythm of the academic semester helps to carry him along, and the vacations between give him a chance to regroup his forces and settle down with his family for a stretch of relatively normal living. Then, too, he is apt to find that his teaching or research job offers a welcome release from the regimen of his courses.

Once he finishes his course requirements, however, or concurrently begins to prepare for his examinations or "prelims," he loses the support of his clear, limited program; and has to provide his own momentum in order to get over vast amounts of material. Now he pushes himself harder, partly in response to the demands of the examination which will comprehend most, if not all, of his general field, and partly in response to the accumulated tensions of his private life—the increasingly pressing need to do well or at least to get done. He holes up much more in the library, and at home is at it farther into the night. His working day can run to sixteen hours and carry over into entire weekends and vacations. The closer the examination date, the more he resists the contending claims of his job and his home life. A batch of student themes or tests now get pushed aside until the last moment; his teaching itself is done more *ad lib,* in varying degrees of cynicism and recklessness. And as the concentration, nervousness, and fatigue of his days undermine his powers of patience and consideration, his marriage tends to suffer in more marked ways. His wife's needs become a distraction, to be dealt with as summarily as possible; communication between them declines—so too, likely as not, does sexual interest. The children get on his nerves altogether. During these months before "prelims," if not earlier, the special desperation of the married graduate student has set in.

After six months, perhaps, he takes his examinations and—if he has been sufficiently systematic and sufficiently ruthless in his preparations—passes them. The siege is over, a few weeks follow of relaxation, of straightening out the private dislocations and disorders, of looking briefly at what had been swept under the rug. He paints the flat and takes walks with the children. Meanwhile, the financial problems, the little deprivations of mean, cramped living, go on. He sees how the other students are already looking for dissertation topics, and begins to grow restless. Thus, if he chooses to stay on campus and write his dissertation, the climb to the top of the last, roughest mountain begins.

ALL THIS IS not to say that the world of the graduate student is one long unrelieved ordeal. There are the particularly deep friendships that develop—the close ties between students dependent on each other's ideas and irony to keep the channels of personal intellectual communication open. Then, too, there are the close ties between couples who need each other for ballast and cheer as well as for baby-sitting, and who have little to protect or begrudge. There is the concert, the lecture, the foreign film series that give university life its pleasant cultural style. There are the livelier graduate student parties in which couples can come alive again and let go. There come periods of satisfaction when the course has been completed, the qualifying exam passed, the dissertation chapter approved, or simply when the student's work is going well and he accepts his own efforts and the imper-

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sonal discipline of the system and the whole vast, intricate web of tradition and endeavor with which a great university transcends its academic vices and follies and keeps the spirit of learning alive. The graduate student has his moments of illumination, of achievement, and of peace, and I have no wish to gainsay them, for they can be very intense.

At the risk of repeating myself, what I do wish to say is that the daily existence which goes on in the cramped quarters of the graduate student enclave, is neither cosy nor simple, and that it exerts a powerful influence on the student's relation to his work. At best, it provides a steady push from behind to make him climb the long trail upward to the degree. At worst, it may drive him right out of graduate school once and for all; or, as often happens, it may drive him to leave the campus before he has completed his dissertation, in order to teach at a smaller school. Here he can double his income as a regular faculty member and provide a better life for his family. This he does at the hazard of trying to write a dissertation, as it were, by mail and at a more intermittent pace —which in the long run can create graver problems than pushing on to the end.

In terms of his intellectual development, the peculiar circumstances of the graduate student's private life foster the process by which even the intellectually ambitious and independent student eventually fits himself into the mold of the efficient, unobjectionable young scholar. The daily price that not only he but his wife (and children) are paying for him to remain in school impels him to steer a prudential course. The man who is struggling to keep his head above water is not likely to try diving for pearls. The student may even come to prefer the routine but manageable course to the challenging but difficult one; the low-pressured, humane, sensible professor to the brilliant but unreliable man; the trivial but safe dissertation topic to the adventurous and problematic one.* He learns to go along with the acceptable style of scholarly thinking, in which "originality" means mainly finding a problem, or segment of one, that is still to be explored, "pertinence" means mainly the amount of fresh factual documentation that can be accumulated, and "soundness" means mainly working within the existing body of "scholarly opinion." Moreover, he begins to find satisfaction in the close, skeptical examination of evidence, in the thoroughness of research, in accumulating a great deal of knowledge about a particular question. He develops a respect for factuality and for careful arguments that remain within clearly defined terms. He discovers that in many cases it is both easier and more satisfying to do the research and ride with the evidence than it is to spin a position out of a few hunches. He realizes that competent scholarship does temper the mind, that to suspend value judgments can contribute to understanding, that small discoveries have their own excitement. In short, he reaches the stage where he is able to write an acceptable dissertation, possibly even a valuable one.

Some dissertations are done in one frantic year, the majority in two or three, some stretch out over ten. But the pattern is usually much the same: a prolonged period of submerged anxiety followed by a growing momentum of nervous energy, as the student begins to see glimpses of the summit of the mountain. The typical intellectual quality of the experience itself is perhaps best suggested by the description which an urbane professor once

* One reason that the interdisciplinary programs such as "American Studies" or "History of Ideas" have not attracted the students they should is that they are felt to involve risks, both in obtaining a degree and a satisfactory position afterward. It is doubtful whether these risks are, in fact, any greater than those involved in the conventional Ph.D., but with all of the compulsion to view the doctoral program as a straight and narrow and prudential path, the student even becomes suspicious of the opportunities for breadth and freedom that are available.

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gave to a class: "First you find a little desk in the stacks where most of the books you will need are shelved. Then, one by one, you take down a book, read it, and transfer its contents in cryptic, quotable form to little white cards. After you have gone through all the books, you take the cards and put them in an order. Then, one by one, you transfer their information to your manuscript. When you are all finished, the manuscript is bound, and one day a librarian carries it back to your place in the stacks and puts it on the shelf." Of course, not all dissertations are done this way but few escape the common fate of being mainly a complicated, exhausting, and expensive form of exercise. For one thing, it is increasingly difficult to find a meaningful research problem which the legions of doctoral students and scholars combing the field each year in search of the same thing have managed to overlook. Besides, the more comprehensive and illuminating the thesis, the more prolonged and uncertain the research and writing will be. The wise dissertation adviser tells the student to get his degree and then worry about doing a definitive piece of work, and if he is as desperate to get done as he usually is, the student tells himself the same.

WILLIAM JAMES said that by the time a man is thirty his character has set like plaster. However rebellious he may have been at the outset, the man who emerges from graduate school at about that age has inevitably moved in the direction of accepting the scholarly image. Exploited by a research or teaching job, subjected to the dislocations of his inner and family life, disarmed by the genteel authoritarianism of the academic will, he has become habituated to the feeling that the deeper questions of personal purpose are not worth asking and that the risks of intellectual freedom, passion, and nonconformity are not worth taking. The intellectual virtues which he has learned to emulate are pretty much those that Leo Marx, recently in these pages, associated with modern documentary scholarship—"precise, neutral, and impersonal."* He has become more narrow, diligent, and cautious in his ideas, more respectable in his style of thinking and writing, more politic in his behavior. He worries more about being "sound" than being stimulating; he finds it more natural to adopt a middle position rather than an extreme one, an analytic line of inquiry rather than an evaluative one, an academically fashionable stance rather than a personal one. He is likely to be more in touch with "scholarly opinion" about his subject than with his own feelings, intuitions, and sense of relevance, and thus to find himself having as much difficulty thinking and writing about history or literature or politics or society in direct, open, non-technical terms as he once had in disciplining his personal demands on his field to the methods and vocabulary of research. The gain in his ability to contribute to the learned journals can involve the loss of the intellectual energy or confidence to communicate beyond them. Five or six years is a long time. The graduate student who once cynically put on the mask of the conventional scholar, planning in his heart to remove it as soon as he has his degree, finds often enough that his face—as George Orwell remarked in another connection—has grown to fit it. Even—judging by Berelson's Ph.D.'s—to grin through it. By then our graduate student, perforce, will have joined the community of scholars. Whether he will still possess a capacity for breadth, inwardness, and risk-taking, a grasp of the time and the culture to which he belongs, whether he will be fit for the intellectual community without which (as Leo Marx wrote at the end of the essay I have cited) "the culture dies"—all of this is another question. One that lies outside the scope of the present discussion, as they say in graduate school.

* "The American Scholar Today" (July 1961).

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BERNARD MALAMUD

IDIOTS FIRST

A Story

THE THICK TICKING of the tin clock stopped. Mendel, dozing in the dark, awoke in fright. The pain returned as he listened for it. He drew on his cold, embittered clothing, and wasted minutes sitting on the edge of the bed.

"Isaac," he ultimately sighed.

In the kitchen, Isaac, his astonished mouth open, held six peanuts in his palm. He placed each on the table. "One . . . two . . . eight."

He gathered each peanut and appeared in the doorway. Mendel, in loose hat and long overcoat, still sat on the bed. Isaac watched with small eyes and ears, thick hair graying the sides of his head.

"Schlaf," he nasally said.

"No," muttered Mendel. As if stifling he rose. "Come, Isaac."

He wound his old watch though the sight of the stopped clock nauseated him.

Isaac wanted to hold it to his ear.

"No, it's late." Mendel put the watch carefully away. In the drawer he found the little paper bag of crumpled ones and fives and slipped it into his overcoat pocket. He helped Isaac on with his coat.

Isaac looked at one dark window, then at the other. Mendel stared at both blank windows and saw nothing.

They went slowly down the darkly lit stairs, Mendel first, Isaac watching the moving shadows on the wall. To one long shadow he offered a peanut.

"Hungrig."

In the vestibule the old man gazed through the glass. The November night was cold and bleak. Opening the door he cautiously thrust his head out. Though he saw nothing he quickly shut the door.

"Ginzberg, that he came to see me yesterday," he whispered in Isaac's ear.

Isaac sucked air.

"You know who I mean?"

Isaac combed his chin with his fingers.

"That's the one, with the black whiskers. Don't talk to him or go with him if he asks you."

Isaac moaned.

"Young people he don't bother so much," Mendel said in afterthought.

It was suppertime and the street was empty but the store windows dimly lit their way to the corner. They crossed the deserted street and went on. Isaac, with a happy cry, pointed to the three golden balls. Mendel smiled but was worn out when they got to the pawnshop.

The pawnbroker, a red-bearded man with black horn-rimmed glasses, was eating a whitefish at the rear of the store. He craned his head, saw them, then settled back to drink his tea.

In five minutes he came forward, patting his shapeless lips with a white handkerchief.

Mendel, breathing heavily, handed him

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the worn gold watch. The pawnbroker, raising his glasses, screwed in his eyepiece. He turned the watch over once. "Eight dollars."

The dying man wet his cracked lips. "I must have thirty-five."

"So go see Rothschild."

"Cost me myself sixty."

"In 1905." The pawnbroker handed back the watch. It had stopped ticking. Mendel wound it slowly. It ticked hollowly.

"Isaac must go to my uncle that he lives in California."

"It's a free country," said the pawnbroker.

Isaac, watching a banjo, snickered.

"What's the matter with him?" the pawnbroker asked.

"So let be eight dollars," muttered Mendel, "but where will I get the rest till tonight?"

"How much for my hat and coat?" he asked.

"No sale." The pawnbroker went behind the cage and wrote out a ticket. He locked the watch in a small drawer but Mendel could still hear it ticking.

In the street he slipped the eight dollars into the paper bag, then searched in his pockets for a scrap of writing. Finding it, he strained to read the address by the light of the street lamp.

As they trudged to the subway, Mendel pointed to the sprinkled sky.

"Isaac, look how many stars are tonight."

"Eggs," said Isaac.

"First we will go to Mr. Fishbein, after we will eat."

They got off the train in upper Manhattan and had to walk for several blocks before they located Fishbein's house.

"A regular palace," Mendel murmured, looking forward to a moment's warmth.

Isaac stared uneasily at the heavy door of the house.

Mendel rang. The servant, a man with long sideburns, came to the door and said Mr. and Mrs. Fishbein were dining and could see no one.

"He should eat in peace but we will wait till he finishes."

"Come back tomorrow morning. Tomorrow morning Mr. Fishbein will talk to you. He don't do business or charity at this time of the night."

"Charity I am not interested—"

"Come back tomorrow."

"Tell him it's life or death—"

"Whose, if I may ask you?"

"So if not his, then mine."

"Don't be such a big smart aleck."

"Look in my face," said Mendel, "and tell me if I got time till tomorrow morning?"

The servant stared at him, then at Isaac, and reluctantly let them in.

The foyer was a vast high-ceilinged room with many pictures on the walls, voluminous silken draperies, a thick flowered rug at foot, and a marble staircase.

Mr. Fishbein, a paunchy bald-headed man with hairy nostrils and small patent leather feet, ran lightly down the stairs, a large napkin tucked under a tuxedo coat button. He stopped on the fourth step from the bottom and examined his visitors.

"Who comes on Friday night to a man that he has guests to spoil him his supper?"

"Excuse me that I bother you, Mr. Fishbein," Mendel said. "If I didn't come now I couldn't come tomorrow."

"Without more preliminaries, please state your business. I'm a hungry man."

"Hungrig," wailed Isaac.

Fishbein adjusted his pince-nez. "What's the matter with him?"

"This is my son Isaac. He is like this all his life."

Isaac mewled.

"I am sending him to California."

"Mr. Fishbein don't contribute to personal pleasure trips."

"I am a sick man and he must go tonight on the train to my Uncle Leo."

"I never give to unorganized charity," Fishbein said, "but if you are hungry I

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will invite you downstairs in the kitchen. We having tonight chicken with stuffed derma."

"All I ask is thirty-five dollars for the train ticket to my uncle in California. I have already the rest."

"Who is your uncle? How old a man?"

"Eighty years, a long life to him."

Fishbein burst into laughter. "Eighty years and you are sending him this—this halfwit."

Mendel, flailing both arms, cried, "Please, no names."

Fishbein politely conceded.

"Where is open the door there we go in the house," the sick man said. "If you will kindly give me thirty-five dollars, God will bless you. What is thirty-five dollars to Mr. Fishbein? Nothing. To me, for my boy, is everything. Enjoy yourself to give me everything."

Fishbein drew himself up to his tallest height.

"Private contributions I don't make—only to institutions. This is my fixed policy."

Mendel sank to his creaking knees on the rug.

"Please, Mr. Fishbein, if not thirty-five, then give maybe twenty."

"Levinson!" Fishbein angrily called.

The servant with the long sideburns appeared at the top of the stairs.

"Show this party where is the door—unless he wishes to partake food before leaving the premises."

"For what I got chicken won't cure it," Mendel said.

"This way, if you please," said Levinson, descending.

Isaac assisted his father up.

"Take him to an institution," Fishbein advised over the marble balustrade. He ran quickly up the stairs and they were at once outside, buffeted by winds.

The walk to the subway was tedious. The wind blew mournfully. Mendel, breathless, glanced furtively at shadows. Isaac, clutching his peanuts in his frozen fist, clung to his father's side. They entered a small park to rest for a minute on a stone bench under a leafless two-branched tree. The thick right branch was raised, the thin left one hung down. A very pale moon rose slowly. So did a stranger as they approached the bench.

"Gut yuntif," he said hoarsely.

Mendel, drained of blood, waved his wasted arms. Isaac yowled sickly. Then a bell chimed and it was only ten. Mendel let out a piercing anguished cry as the bearded stranger disappeared in the bushes. A policeman came running, and though he beat the bushes with his nightstick, could turn up nothing. Mendel and Isaac hurried out of the little park. When Mendel glanced back the dead tree had its thin arm raised, the thick one down. He moaned.

They boarded a trolley, stopping at the house of a former friend, but he had died years ago. On the same block they went into a cafeteria and ordered two fried eggs for Isaac. The tables were crowded except where a heavy-set man sat eating soup with kasha. After one look at him they left in haste, though Isaac wept.

Mendel had another address on a slip of paper but the house was too far away, in Queens, so they stood in a doorway, shivering.

What can I do, he frantically thought, in one short hour?

He remembered the furniture in the house. It was junk but might bring a few dollars. "Come, Isaac." They went once more to the pawnbroker's to talk to him, but the shop was dark and an iron gate, rings and gold watches glinting through it, was drawn tight across his place of business.

They huddled behind a telephone pole, both freezing. Isaac whimpered.

"See the big moon, Isaac. The whole sky is white."

He pointed but Isaac wouldn't look.

Mendel dreamed for a minute of the sky lit up, sheets of light in all directions. Under the sky, in California, sat Uncle

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Leo, drinking tea with lemon. Mendel felt warm but woke up cold.

Across the street stood an ancient brick synagogue.

He pounded on the huge door but no one appeared. He waited till he had breath and desperately knocked again. At last there were footsteps within, and the synagogue door creaked open on its brass hinges. A darkly dressed sexton, holding a dripping candle, glared at them.

"Who knocks this time of the night with so much noise on the synagogue door?"

Mendel told the sexton his troubles. "Please, I wish to speak to the rabbi."

"The rabbi is an old man. He sleeps now. His wife won't let you see him. Go home and come back tomorrow."

"To tomorrow I said goodbye already. I am a dying man."

Though the sexton seemed doubtful he pointed to an old wooden house next door. "In there he lives." He disappeared into the synagogue with his lit candle, casting shadows around him.

Mendel, with Isaac clutching his sleeve, went up the wooden steps and rang the bell. After five minutes a bulky, big-faced, gray-haired old woman came out on the porch with a torn robe thrown over her nightdress. She emphatically said the rabbi was sleeping and could not be waked.

But as she was insisting, the rabbi himself tottered to the door. He listened a minute and said, "Who wants to see me let them come in."

They entered a cluttered room. The rabbi was a skinny man with bent shoulders and a wisp of white beard. He wore a flannel nightgown and black skullcap; his feet were bare.

"Vey is mir," his wife muttered. "Put on shoes or tomorrow comes sure pneumonia." She was a woman with a big belly, years younger than her husband. Staring at Isaac, she turned away.

Mendel apologetically related his errand. "All I need more is thirty-five dollars."

"Thirty-five?" said the rabbi's wife. "Why not thirty-five thousand? Who has so much money? My husband is a poor rabbi. The doctors take away every cent."

"Dear friend," said the rabbi, "if I had I would give you."

"I got already seventy," Mendel said, heavy-hearted. "All I need is thirty-five more."

"God will give you," said the rabbi.

"In the grave," said Mendel. "I need tonight. Come, Isaac."

"Wait," called the rabbi.

He hurried inside, came out with a fur-lined caftan, and handed it to Mendel.

"Yascha," shrieked his wife, "not your new coat!"

"I got my old one. Who needs two coats for one body?"

"Yascha, I am screaming—"

"Who can go among poor people, tell me, in a new coat?"

"Yascha," she cried, "what can this man do with your coat? He needs tonight the money. The pawnbrokers are asleep."

"So let him wake them up."

"No." She grabbed the coat from Mendel.

He held on to one sleeve, wrestling her for the coat. Her I know, Mendel thought. "Shylock," he muttered. Her eyes glittered.

The rabbi groaned and tottered dizzily. His wife cried out as Mendel yanked the coat from her hands.

"Run," cried the rabbi.

"Run, Isaac."

They ran out of the house and down the steps.

"Stop, you thief," called the rabbi's wife.

The rabbi pressed both hands to his temple and fell to the floor.

"Help!" his wife wept. "Heart attack! Help!"

But Mendel and Isaac ran through the streets with the rabbi's new fur-lined caftan. After them noiselessly ran Ginzberg.

It was very late when Mendel bought the train ticket in the only booth open.

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There was no time to stop for a sandwich so Isaac ate his peanuts and they hurried to the train in the vast deserted station.

"So in the morning," Mendel gasped as they ran, "there will come a man that he sells sandwiches and coffee. Eat but get change. When reaches California the train, will be waiting for you on the station Uncle Leo. If you don't recognize him he will recognize you. Tell him I send best regards."

But when they arrived at the gate to the platform it was shut, the light out.

Mendel, groaning, beat on the gate with his fists.

"Too late," said the uniformed ticket collector, a bulky, bearded man with hairy nostrils and a fishy smell.

He pointed to the station clock. "Already past twelve."

"But I see standing there still the train," Mendel said, hopping in his grief.

"It just left—in one more minute."

"A minute is enough. Just open the gate."

"Too late I told you."

Mendel socked his bony chest with both hands. "With my whole heart I beg you this little favor."

"Favors you had enough already. For you the train is gone. You shoulda been dead already at midnight. I told you that yesterday. This is the best I can do."

"Ginzberg!" Mendel shrank from him.

"Who else?" The voice was metallic, eyes glittered, the expression amused.

"For myself," the old man begged, "I don't ask a thing. But what will happen to my boy?"

Ginzberg shrugged slightly. "What will happen happens. This isn't my responsibility. I got enough to think about without worrying about somebody on one cylinder."

"What then is your responsibility?"

"To create conditions. To make happen what happens. I ain't in the anthropomorphic business."

"Whatever business you in, where is your pity?"

"This ain't my commodity. The law is the law."

"Which law is this?"

"The cosmic universal law, goddamit, the one I got to follow myself."

"What kind of law is it?" cried Mendel. "For God's sake, don't you understand what I went through in my life with this poor boy? Look at him, for thirty-nine years, since the day he was born, I wait for him to grow up, but he doesn't. Do you understand what this means in a father's heart? Why don't you let him go to his uncle?" His voice had risen and he was shouting.

Isaac mewled loudly.

"Better calm down or you'll hurt somebody's feeling," Ginzberg said, with a wink toward Isaac.

"All my life," Mendel cried, his body trembling, "what did I have? I was poor. I suffered from my health. When I worked I worked too hard. When I didn't work was worse. My wife died a young woman. But I didn't ask from anybody nothing. Now I ask a small favor. Be so kind, Mr. Ginzberg."

The ticket collector was picking his teeth with a match stick.

"You ain't the only one, my friend, some got it worse. That's how it goes."

"You dog, you." Mendel lunged at Ginzberg's throat and began to choke. "You bastard, don't you understand what it means human?"

They struggled nose to nose. Ginzberg, though his astonished eyes popped, began to laugh. "You pipsqueak nothing. I'll freeze you to pieces."

His eyes lit in fury and Mendel felt an unbearable cold like an icy dagger invading his body, all of his parts shriveling.

Now I die without helping Isaac.

A crowd gathered. Isaac yelped in fright.

Clinging to Ginzberg in his last agony, Mendel saw reflected in the ticket collector's eyes the depth of his terror. But he saw that Ginzberg, staring at himself in Mendel's eyes, saw mirrored in them the

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extent of his own awful wrath. He beheld a shimmering, starry, blinding light that produced darkness.

Ginzberg looked astounded. "Who me?"

Slowly his grip on the squirming old man loosened, and Mendel, his heart barely beating, slumped to the ground.

"Go," Ginzberg muttered, "take him to the train."

"Let pass," he commanded the gatekeeper.

The crowd parted. Isaac helped his father get up and they tottered down the steps to the platform where the train waited, lit and ready to go.

Mendel found Isaac a coach seat and hastily embraced him. "Help Uncle Leo, Isaakil. Also remember your father and mother."

"Be nice to him," he said to the conductor. "Show him where everything is."

He waited on the platform until the train began slowly to move. Isaac sat at the edge of his seat, his face strained in the direction of his journey. When the train was gone, Mendel ascended the stairs to see what had become of Ginzberg.

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DAN JACOBSON

JAMES BALDWIN AS SPOKESMAN

IN HIS FIRST book of essays, *Notes of a Native Son,* James Baldwin can be said to have tried to fix within himself an area of experience which he could feel was truly his own, to do with as he liked; a clearing or a camp-site in which he could enjoy the privacy that any man is entitled to. The peculiar difficulty of the task, as he saw it, arose from the fact that he is an American Negro; and hence the object of innumerable assumptions and prejudices held about all Negroes (and especially perhaps about Negro writers), irrespective of what they themselves are, individually, or of what they want to be. In that first book Mr. Baldwin appeared to be hacking away desperately at every possible demand or insistence which might be made upon him by his public: "No," he seemed to be saying continually, "*this* isn't me, nor this, nor that, nor this again. I'm a man who doesn't yet know who he is; and it's you, with all your ignorant claims upon me, who prevent me from finding out what I am. And you keep on making these claims upon me, you keep on categorizing me, because you imagine that if you do so, then you'll know better who you are. But I will not become any of the things you want me to be; look how many of your categories I've escaped from already!"

Notes of a Native Son remains, in my opinion, Mr. Baldwin's best book, either in fiction or non-fiction: it is more complex and more forceful than any of the others, more inward with the experience it seeks to describe and at the same time more detached from it. But the position at which Mr. Baldwin arrived at the end of the book was not one that he himself could linger in. "Yes," came the voice of the external world (or was it Mr. Baldwin's own? And how can you tell the difference between them?), "we can see that you are supple enough to escape from all the prisons we had prepared for you. You are not a happy-go-lucky Negro, nor a Marxist Negro; you're not a Faulknerian Negro who is prepared simply to 'endure' as long as we call upon you to do so, nor a persecuted, noble Negro whom all right-thinking liberals will find it a pleasure to admire; you're not a *negritude*-hawking Negro, nor a vengeance-seeking Negro, nor a Negro whose sexual prowess should be an example to us all. You have escaped from us, we grant you. But what have you escaped *to*?"

Mr. Baldwin's new collection of essays, *Nobody Knows My Name,** is subtitled "More Notes of a Native Son"; by intention, and by achievement too, it carries on the argument of the earlier

DAN JACOBSON, who now lives in England, grew up in South Africa and has written frequently about Negro-White relationships and attitudes. Three of his novels—*The Trap, Dance in the Sun,* and *Evidences of Love*—are concerned with this theme, as are a number of the essays he has published in COMMENTARY, notably "Return to South Africa" (July 1960). Mr. Jacobson's most recent book is *No Further West.*

* Dial, 241 pp., $4.50.

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book. Mr. Baldwin describes the collection as "a very small part of a private log-book": in his log-book Mr. Baldwin describes the reasons why he returned to the United States from a prolonged exile abroad; he reports on a conference of African writers and artists in Paris; he writes a "Letter from Harlem" and an article on the riot by American Negroes in the United Nations Assembly after the death of Patrice Lumumba; two articles come from the Southern states, one being a portrait of a boy who is the only Negro attending an "integrated" school, in spite of the persecution of his schoolfellows, and the other simply describing Mr. Baldwin's own reactions during his visit to the "Old Country," as he, a New York Negro, calls the South; there is a series of three obituary articles on the Negro novelist, Richard Wright.

FROM THIS PARTIAL description of the book's contents it is evident that the clearing, the camp-site, to which Mr. Baldwin managed to escape has turned out to be, in the end, right in the middle of the American market place. The private, secret place he was trying to establish for himself has been found among the newspaper headlines and on the country's television screens: it is in the school which is being "integrated," the restaurant which is being "sat-in," the gallery of the United Nations building on New York's East Side. To some this might seem a most bitter irony, even a confession of defeat. To me, I must confess, it seems nothing of the kind: merely an inevitability, given Mr. Baldwin's gifts, his patriotism, the depth to which he cares about his fellow Negroes and his fellow Americans. I do not want to make Mr. Baldwin's position sound more simple than it really is; but it has quite visibly become a public position, in which he is forced to deal with public issues.

The effects of this on Mr. Baldwin's writing are not entirely happy. We hear too often in these essays the voice of his will rather than the voice of his sensibility; there are too many examples of rhetoric, of exhortation, of uplift, of reproach, in the book, and they undoubtedly weaken the impact it makes. But the moral to be drawn from these faults is not at all that writers should eschew the political struggles into which their own deepest inclinations draw them. Anyone who might be inclined to draw that moral should try to imagine what the consequences to his work would have been if Mr. Baldwin, feeling as he does, had denied his own deep impulsions, and had turned away from the public struggle, in order to protect his "art." Life and art make so many different claims, no creative worker can possibly meet them all; everyone has at times to sacrifice the one for the other. But I believe firmly that for any writer his art must follow upon his life; he must live as he most deeply wishes to, and, in an ultimate sense, leave his art to look after itself. If it cannot do so, it will never be much of a growth anyway.

I am not suggesting that Mr. Baldwin's present position is the only possible one for any serious Negro writer to adopt: other writers have different impulsions which they must seek to understand and follow. But one cannot possibly say of Mr. Baldwin that he should be occupying other, or "higher," ground; all one can ask, rather, is that he should explore even more thoroughly than he has so far done the ground upon which he is now standing. He is too serious and gifted a man to be lectured to; but he is also too sensitive and too intelligent, and the reports he could be bringing us are too valuable, for us to be satisfied with anything less than the best he can do. And there is enough of his best in the present book to make one look for more, and to probe at the points which it has failed to emerge.

Mr. Baldwin is also an American, and his book is directed so intimately at his fellow Americans that anyone who is not

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American feels himself at a great disadvantage in trying to assess, in a way which would not be superficial, the experiences he has described. In my own case, to speak quite personally, as I must at this point, the difficulty of assessment is perhaps made more acute, rather than less so, by the fact that I was born and brought up in South Africa—a country in which the problem of color is even more desperate than it is in the United States, but where it assumes such very different forms and shapes. On the other hand, as an ex-South African, and as a Jew, I can claim to know something, both from within and without, of the kind of feeling that is released within groups and individuals when they are threatened, or feel themselves to be threatened, by the demands and prejudices of other groups with whom they share a town, or city, or country. And I know, too, a little of the mythologies and demonologies with which a group in power will attempt to rationalize its own oppressive action; and of how, in the very processes of oppression, those mythologies may come to have something of the truth in them. How much of the truth, ultimately, it is the oppressed who decide: that is the one freedom which cannot be taken from them.

BUT THE CASES with which I am familiar are, I repeat, different from those Mr. Baldwin writes about. However, before going on to discuss the greatest difference, and the consequences it seems to have, I should try to indicate the nature of what Mr. Baldwin believes to be the experience of the American Negro. That experience, to describe it very briefly, is appalling. It is appalling in the South, where everybody knows it's appalling, not least the white Southerners; but Mr. Baldwin insists that it is equally appalling in the North, where everybody imagines that the problem has been "solved," or at least is being dealt with adequately. He was horrified by what he saw in the South; but he writes with passion of the "insults, the indifference and cruelty" which the Northern Negro has to encounter every working day; of the filthy ghettos in which the Northern Negro is compelled to live; of the rackets which exploit for gain his poverty and powerlessness; of the delinquency, the drug addiction, and the ignorance which continue to generate themselves in ever more brutal forms among these insulted and injured people. I should say, too, that Mr. Baldwin writes with only occasional lapses into histrionics; rather, with an evident attempt to avoid self-pity, and to be restrained and charitable toward both white and black Americans. Yet his summing-up is this: "Negroes are . . . ignored in the North and are under surveillance in the South and suffer hideously in both places."

There is, moreover, one peculiarly American aspect of the suffering of Negroes which Mr. Baldwin brings sharply into focus. Is it really worse to be oppressed by a power which says, in effect, "Yes, I am an oppressor, I'm filled with hatred toward you and acknowledge my hate as the only link between us"—is it worse to be oppressed by such a power than by one which speaks and has spoken for hundreds of years of liberty and the pursuit of happiness; which asserts daily through the mouths of its schoolchildren that it is "one nation, indivisible, under God, with liberty and justice for all"; which offers you posts in the Cabinet and a chance for the Presidency in a generation's time; and which, when you then step forward merely to send your child to a decent school or to stand in line for a cup of coffee or to buy a house in a middle-class suburb, attacks you and your children with bricks and spittle, abuse and truncheons?

South Africa is mentioned several times in Mr. Baldwin's book, and always as the worst place of all, the last term of comparison he can invoke to suggest the intensity of Negro suffering in America. Now it is certain that conditions in South Africa are thoroughly bad; and that more

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and more intense hatred and anger accumulate every day among the country's oppressed blacks. Yet it remains true, too, that the happiest people one sees in the streets of South Africa today are the black people. I have been met with total incredulity when I have said this in conversation with people in England; but it is true, and I am not the only South African, black or white, who has seen it. And it is true for a number of reasons, only one of which we need go into here. The blacks are cheerful in South Africa because they are in the majority within South Africa itself, and overwhelmingly so within the entire continent. They know that, eventually, and no matter how long their present tribulations may last, they cannot lose the struggle in which they have found themselves. Though the thought has yet to make its way, consciously, into the minds of millions of Africans, even the least conscious among them knows already that one day they will have power.

POWER: THE UGLY WORD is out. In nothing is Mr. Baldwin more of an American, and more of an American Negro, than the reluctance with which he discusses questions of power. Reluctance may seem an odd word to use about someone who at a certain point writes of himself: "Well, I know how power works, it has worked on me, and if I didn't know how power worked, I would be dead." But Mr. Baldwin makes my case, indirectly, when he goes on to say, "I have simply never been able to afford myself any illusions concerning the manipulation of that power." For what he is confessing here is that for a Negro the exercise of direct political and economic power appears to be all but unattainable. And it is at this very point, I feel, that the weaknesses of Mr. Baldwin's writing tend to reveal themselves. Instead of analyzing the consequences of Negro powerlessness, or speculating about the kinds of power they may hope to win for themselves, he too frequently contents himself with making moral appeals, or with issuing warnings. The warnings, God knows, are justified; the appeals are indeed those of reason and intelligence and compassion. But does he believe they will be listened to? Does he *really* believe it? And if they are not listened to, what does he propose to do then, what other courses of action does he believe to be open to him?

The American Negro, Mr. Baldwin believes, tells white Americans "where the bottom is: *because he is there,* and *where* he is, beneath us, we know where the limits are and how far we must not fall. We must not fall beneath him." There is only one way a group can rise from such a position: through the exercise of power. And Mr. Baldwin all but explicitly admits as much in his repeated references to the effect upon American Negroes of the emergence of the independent black states of Africa; when he writes, for example, "The American Negro can no longer, nor will he ever again, be controlled by the white American's image of him. This fact has everything to do with the rise of Africa in world affairs," or again, "The power of the white world to control [the Negroes'] identities was crumbling as they were born; and by the time they were able to react to the world, Africa was on the stage of history. This could not but have an extraordinary effect on their own morale. . . . It also signals, at last, the end of the Negro situation in this country, as we have so far known it. Any effort, from here on out, to keep the Negro in his 'place' can only have the most extreme and unlucky repercussions."

What I am asking for, I suppose, is that Mr. Baldwin should tell us what he imagines those "extreme and unlucky repercussions" might be, within himself and among American Negroes—leaving aside, for the moment, what they may be among the colored nations of the world. This is not a small thing to ask; for what it presupposes is that, having so little

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effective power locally, the militant American Negroes, for all the determination and self-restraint they have so far shown, may yet fail to achieve their ends, and that Mr. Baldwin's hopes for "a country in which there are no minorities —for the first time in the history of the world" may remain illusory.

It is profoundly to be hoped, for every conceivable reason, that the American Negroes will be able to win for themselves a place other than the one they now occupy; but the fate of all easily identifiable and powerless minorities in the past does not allow one to nourish any large and easy expectations—even though the United States is "different"; even though the country is goaded forward, and not merely tormented, by the high ideals it has explicitly formulated for itself. The irony of the situation, however, is that the answers Mr. Baldwin could bring from his present position may prove very useful, one day, to the rest of us: to the whites all over the world, who are slowly, reluctantly, incredulously beginning to realize that they are a minority, too, in a world that they no longer own.

HOWEVER, THE burden of further self-scrutiny does not rest upon Mr. Baldwin alone, for the effect of reading his book must be to make anyone who thinks of himself as a liberal reflect more deeply upon the nature and the conditions of his own liberalism. I do not mean here, only, that he is forced to look for the prejudices, irrationalities, and compulsions which might lie hidden among his own habits of thought; but also that he is forced to examine again the extent to which he really believes that it is possible to moderate and ameliorate the operations of brute power in human affairs.

To deal with the question of prejudice first; with the mythologies and demonologies which Mr. Baldwin analyzes in these essays, as he did in his earlier book. He points out again and again how the Negro "is penalized for the guilty imagination of the white people who invest him with their hates and longings," and how he becomes "the principal target of their sexual paranoia." In this book, as in *Notes of a Native Son,* he traces the origins of these paranoias to the first shocked confrontation between the Puritan white and the tribal African; and to the exploitations and guilts of the colonial and slave-owning periods, to which that first confrontation so rapidly led. And again and again, as anyone brought up in a society racked with prejudice against the blacks would have to, I found myself agreeing with him: yes, it was so; yes, I had seen these compulsions betrayed in words and actions; yes, I had even tried to write about them, in words similar to Mr. Baldwin's own. Yet it would be less than honest if I weren't to admit that I found myself offering these agreements, invariably, *on behalf of others,* not on my own behalf. And I imagine that something similar would be the reaction of many of the whites who will read Mr. Baldwin's book—or, for that matter, this article in COMMENTARY.

Mr. Baldwin would possibly regard this as no more than a further example of the liberal complacency and self-righteousness he so often inveighs against; but, with the example of what is happening in Africa so vividly in my mind, I cannot help feeling a certain dissatisfaction, even an impatience, with his methods of analysis; I cannot help wondering how relevant or useful they still are. I have suggested that the great, perhaps the insuperable, problem which faces the American Negroes in their struggle is their present lack of political and economic power in American society. The world respects those who have power, and abuses, maltreats, or patronizes those who have none; and the abuse, maltreatment, and patronage assume every possible form which general tradition and individual malevolence, ignorance, and insensitivity may suggest. Almost, it seems a kind of flattery of the oppressor to say more of

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him than this; or at least to permit him to imagine that his fantasies and rationalizations would be of any importance at all, were it not for his power.

When I speak of "the world" in this way, I do not exclude those who think of themselves as liberals; I do not exclude myself. I know from my own experience that the opportunity of meeting, outside South Africa, black politicians and intellectuals who have won some direct power for themselves, and who are already able to take the exercise of that power for granted, has had a greatly liberating effect upon me: more than anything else, these meetings have enabled me to cast from myself a part of that burden of pity and anxiety, guilt and automatic benevolence toward people with black skins, which my South African experience had imposed upon me. This is not to say that such meetings between whites and blacks are without pains, on both sides; but they are pains of a different kind from those of which Mr. Baldwin writes.

THUS I HAVE no wish to defend the characteristic and traditional postures of white liberalism; they are, in their own way, cramped, bullying, and dishonest. I realized that there are many "liberals" who are still unable to perceive that it is, for example, as grotesque and baneful to admire the Negro because of the sexuality you impute to him as it is to hate him for the same reason. Yet, under the new circumstances obtaining in the world today, I don't believe that it is an impossibly difficult task to school oneself out of follies of that kind, if the opportunity is given to one, and if one really wishes to do so. Nor, in spite of Mr. Baldwin's insistence to the contrary, do I believe it impossible for a white man to have any conception of the inwardness of Negro experience: it depends on who the Negro is, and who the white man, and in what way they meet.

However, if one thinks of the world as invariably making responses of a more or less respectful nature to the facts of power, and if one sees in onself something of these same responses; if one thinks of history as simply an ebb and flow of power, always producing in those who possess it the same impulses toward the maltreatment or patronage of those who plainly do not possess it, what point is there in asking the white man, whether in Alabama, Algeria, or South Africa, to refrain from abusing his power? Or in hoping that the black man in his turn will not abuse the power he is so swiftly winning in other parts of the world?

The questions suggest their own dispirited answers: that is why, perhaps, liberals like myself have taken to asking them so frequently these days. For the fact is that "history" and "the world" alike show that it is indeed possible, at certain times and in certain places, to moderate the operation of brute power; just as it is possible to struggle with one's own responses to these operations. The questions to be asked, rather, in each case, are whether we have such a place here, whether this is the time, and what alternative powers of principle, persuasion, and example it may be possible effectively to use?

Whether or not the United States is a place where persuasion and example can undo the injustices of which Mr. Baldwin speaks we shall know within a matter of years. It is certain that only years, not generations, are left in which the injustices can be undone. The movement of our time being what it is, it is suicidal for white Americans to harry and persecute black men because they are black —as suicidal, and almost as directly so, as it is for white South Africans.

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R. H. S. CROSSMAN

READING KHRUSHCHEV'S MIND

IS FAULTY INTELLIGENCE about the secrets of the Communist bloc the main reason for the fact that we are losing the cold war? In the case of Cuba, a blatant effort was made to shift the blame from the White House to the Central Intelligence Agency and to suggest that, if Mr. Kennedy had received the correct information from the American secret service, his decision would have been different. The alibi does not convince me, and I am strengthened in my skepticism by what happened at Suez. Sir Anthony Eden had a lifelong experience of the Middle East; yet his attack on Port Said was loaded with blunders and based on an incomprehensible assumption that Nasser could be toppled by threats. It would be tempting to assume that all this was due to the failings of the British secret service and the Foreign Office. But in this case we happen to know that the experts, most of whom were never consulted, were almost unanimously opposed to the expedition: the decision was taken by three men—Eden, Macmillan, and Selwyn Lloyd. No! The trouble about our leaders in the West is not that they are inadequately briefed. Never in the history of the world has there been such an army of experts—journalists, academics, and public servants—engaged in the task of collecting and evaluating information about international affairs, and nowhere do the published results of this expert work reach a higher standard than in the democratic countries of the NATO alliance. If the free world is the place where, *par excellence,* one may pursue the truth in politics, it is also, *per contra,* the place where that truth is nearly always disregarded.

It is often argued, however, that the Communist bloc is a special case, since here reliable information is impossible to obtain and our statesmen are therefore left at the mercy of the political astronomy of the Sovietologists and the political astrology of the Kremlinologists. On this theory, the world is divided into two parts, one where the facts are available but disregarded by Western statesmen and one where, since the facts are not available, no one can be blamed for our defeats. This belief in the impenetrable secrecy that surrounds the doings of the totalitarian leaders is very largely a legend, at least so far as political intelligence is concerned. Of course it is true that we are faced with much greater difficulties in obtaining military and economic information about the Soviet Union than the Russians are in obtaining similar information about the West. But, in the sphere of politics, far more information is available for forming an estimate of Soviet intentions than most people realize. Indeed, I am ready to assert that the actions of the

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men in the Kremlin are considerably more predictable, in the strictest sense of that word, than those of the men in the White House.

I can support this assertion from my own experience. For five years, during the war, I was in charge of psychological warfare against Germany, and one of our jobs was the collection and evaluation of political intelligence about the Nazis. One of the chief sources of our information was the German propaganda machine. We had a huge staff of analysts working on the German press and radio and, from my point of view, the most valuable section of this intelligence division was that devoted to the job of working back from the published propaganda to the Top Secret directive on which it was based. Each week we were able to produce a reconstruction of Goebbels' orders and, from the weekly changes in those orders, we were able not only to deduce his estimate of German morale but to get a good idea of Hitler's intentions. If a German psychological warrior had set himself the task of reconstructing an Anglo-American directive for our propaganda output, he would soon have discovered the task was impossible. Even in wartime, democracies work in an incoherent, unsystematic way, and much of our propaganda output was the result of individual initiative in the lower echelons, in violation of top-level directives. In a totalitarian state, however, the machine works systematically, orders are obeyed without individual aberration, and, most important of all, the central directive is strait-jacketed in ideology. Hence the contrast between the unpredictability of democratic behavior and the predictability of totalitarian behavior. I shall emphasize later the differences between German fascism and Russian Communism. But, in this important respect, we found a similarity between them. In both cases the state machine was subordinated to the party machine and the party machine to a central ideological dictatorship. In both cases, therefore, observable changes in public behavior provided hard evidence of a change in the secret directive.

There was one other respect in which Nazism and Communism resembled each other and were both of them different from Western democracy. In the West we must distinguish between the public and private personae of our statesmen, and between official party policies and individual views, and one reason for the unpredictability of Western statesmanship is the interaction of these factors on each other. In order to understand Jack, it is necessary to understand Jackie and Bobby, as well as to discover, if we can, the President's real views about the Catholic church. It is not mere scandalmongering that makes the journalist investigate the private lives and private opinions of our leaders, because these are vital factors in their public actions. But in totalitarian states this distinction of the private and public persona, of the party line and the individual opinion, largely disappears. The more one studies Hitler, the more one realizes that his dirty little private life did not matter. Indeed, his strength lay in the fact that his public persona was his whole personality. He felt no conflict of conscience or clash of loyalties: on the contrary, he felt that, in his integrated personality, National Socialism, and with it the German people, had achieved their supreme centralized expression. So to understand Hitler all we needed was an understanding of National Socialism—and of German history.

MAY NOT the same be true of the great Communists? May we not be able to understand their behavior and predict their actions exclusively in terms of their public and publicized Communist philosophies? The question has been forced on me by reading a whole batch of books about Khrushchev—good, bad, and indifferent. In the preface to one of them,* Mr. Lazar Pistrak writes:

* *The Grand Tactician* (Praeger, 296 pp., $6.00).

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> Without an insight into private life, the contours of the subject are blurry, resembling an underexposed or underdeveloped photograph. Biographers spare no effort in collecting data concerning all aspects of the life of their subject. . . . In Communist countries, however, where secrecy is the rule, Communist leaders are free from any obligation to present their record to the people. . . . This is why this attempt to write Khrushchev's biography can be only a partial success.

Curiously enough, Mr. Pistrak (and, to a lesser extent, Mr. Konrad Kellen, who has also written a life of Khrushchev*) disproves this assertion by his own very competent biography. Reading these two accounts of Khrushchev's rise to power, I was struck, first, by the number of hard facts that both authors have collected and, secondly, by the clear lines of the portrait that emerges from each study. There is nothing "blurry" in either of these books —nothing "resembling an underexposed photograph." And the reason is simple. The details of Khrushchev's so-called private life are insignificant and irrelevant, since his whole personality has been expressed in his Communist activities. True enough, as Mr. Pistrak points out, the old Bolsheviks, whose personalities had developed before 1917, did have a private life that impinged on their Communist activity. It sometimes conflicted with their Communist activity and undermined their single-minded loyalty to the goal of world revolution. But Khrushchev was not an old Bolshevik. He joined the party in 1918; and, although his attitude to life was deeply conditioned both by his working-class origins and by the impact of the revolution, he is the first Communist leader whose whole public life has been lived inside the totalitarian state. That is why there is nothing to know about him apart from his public activities, which for many years have been recorded month by month in the Russian press.

Comparing *The Grand Tactician, Khrushchev—A Political Portrait,* and, to a lesser extent, Harry Schwartz's *The Red Phoenix,*† one soon comes to the conclusion that, in the case of Khrushchev's life and character, the facts are not in dispute. Throughout the Stalin period he was a Stalinoid party boss, with none of the mental reservations that most old Bolsheviks had. On no occasion and on no issue did he fail, in the interests of his career, to outdo the master's worst excesses—and his subservience to the tyrant continued right to the end. The attack on Stalin in the famous secret speech was the work of a man who had neither opposed Stalinism at the time nor repented of it afterward. It was the calculated maneuver of a power politician, determined himself to become the autocrat of Russia.

DOES THIS MEAN that Khrushchev is a second Stalin? Of course not. As the new personification of Communism, he realizes that the spiral of history has carried the Soviet Union beyond the Stalinist stage and that the kind of rule he must now exert, though as autocratic as Stalin's, must be adapted to the new environment. Khrushchev has not liberalized Russia out of an abstract love of liberalism. Nor does he avoid murdering those he purges out of moral compunction. He has analyzed, according to his ideological maxims, the social and economic revolution inside the Soviet Union and deduced the changes of directive required to maintain the dominance of the party.

His novel method of handling international relations is to be explained in the same way. Whereas Stalin remained inscrutable inside the Kremlin, Khrushchev has made himself a world celebrity, traveling incessantly and absenting himself for weeks on end from the seat of power in Moscow. He does this not because he has accepted the Western view of how a popular leader should behave, but because, as

* *Khrushchev—A Political Portrait* (Praeger, 271 pp., $5.00).

† Praeger, 427 pp., $6.00.

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a dedicated Communist, he sees that this kind of public behavior will accelerate the collapse of the West.

Some believe that Khrushchev's travels will modify his views of the West and make him readier to cooperate in permanent peaceful relations. There is not a single fact in his recorded life history which confirms this belief. One of the characteristics of a totalitarian mind, whether Nazi or Communist, is its inability to see the outside world objectively. "Objectivity," in this sense, is a mental attitude produced by special environmental and educational conditions entirely foreign to the Communist world, and it was the trouble of the old Bolsheviks that they retained some vestiges of it. Khrushchev never knew what it was. He can no more be "objective" in his assessment of American capitalism than he can be "fair" to an opponent in conflict or "generous" to an enemy when defeated. He is tone deaf to this whole scale of values, which were exterminated from Russian politics before he entered the Communist party. When he makes what seems to us a ludicrous judgment on the West (for instance, his remark to Walter Lippmann that Kennedy is run by Rockefeller), he is not stupid or deliberately deceiving himself. He is simply seeing the West through Communist eyes and judging it by the only set of values he knows, those by which merits are judged in the Communist totalitarian state.

I had the good fortune to spend an evening with Khrushchev in the spring of 1957, when he visited London with Marshal Bulganin. "K and B" soon made themselves celebrities, though the British crowds never took them to their hearts. They had accepted an invitation to dine with the National Executive of the Labor party, and I flew back from Warsaw in time to attend that famous, comradely occasion, which ended with Nye Bevan shaking his fist at Khrushchev while "K" delivered a forty-minute hectoring harangue to his hosts. The fact that this harangue was impromptu and utterly spontaneous made it all the more revealing. As a student of the Nazi leaders, I was at once aware that I was face to face with an integrated totalitarian personality, with the cleverness of Goebbels, the brutal humor of Goering, the intuitive cunning of Hitler, and the identification of one's self with the forces of history that all the Nazi leaders shared. One sat appalled by the coldness of his cruelty, the dynamism of his will power, and, above all, by the triumphant blindness he displayed to what we regard as objective fact.

The personality of Western leaders, whether they are big men or small men, is as complex and divided as the constitutions of the democracies in which they work. What impressed me most about Khrushchev was his uncomplicated energy. He behaved like a bull in the full flood of its virility, surrounded by a herd of castrated oxen. And in a sense that is just what he is. For one of the main achievements of Western democracy is to castrate the brutal ambitions of the natural leader, to inhibit his natural readiness to rely on violence, and teach him to fulfill the frustrating task of a public servant instead of becoming by violence the public's master. Trained in Britain, Khrushchev would have become an Ernest Bevin; in the United States, a John L. Lewis—two oxen who retained some of their virility even when yoked to the democratic plough.

READING WALTER LIPPMANN'S elegant little summary of his recent eight-hour talks with Khrushchev,* I felt my memories of that evening in the Commons revive. The account Mr. Lippmann gives is true to the conversation of Khrushchev. I am sure that, in summarizing eight hours of talk, he has chosen all the salient points and given us a rounded picture of Khrushchev's *meaning*. Nevertheless, there seems to me to be one distortion.

* *The Coming Tests With Russia* (Atlantic-Little, Brown, 37 pp., $2.50).

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In describing Khrushchev's policies, *The Coming Tests With Russia* inevitably translates them in the terms of Mr. Lippmann's Western philosophy. As a result, we see not the real Khrushchev who lives in the Kremlin, but a picture of what he would be like if his personality conformed to our standards—a Russian ox, in fact, not a Communist bull. After reading Lippmann, it is essential to take a good dose of Pistrak or Kellen to remind us of the red-blooded realities of life in a totalitarian state.

But if Nazi and Communist leaders have similar personalities, and if their ideologies are equally totalitarian, what exactly is the difference between Nikita Khrushchev and Adolf Hitler? The answer to this question, according to Messrs. N. H. Mager and Jacques Katel—who have constructed in *Conquest Without War** what they describe as an "analytical anthology" of Khrushchev's speeches, interviews, and conversations—is "very little." Indeed, they have compiled this book with the sole purpose of providing the Russian dictator with the *Mein Kampf* he failed by an oversight to write. The aim of the exercise is clear. For years his opponents misjudged Hitler, because they would not take *Mein Kampf* seriously. The book seemed so blatantly false and futile that they could not conceive that the head of the German state could really mean it. Messrs. Mager and Katel believe that, in facing the Soviet Union, the West is afflicted with a similar blindness. So they have collected Khrushchev's sayings on a number of topics and added parallel passages from other books, as well as learned notes and confrontations, designed to prove that Soviet imperialism is the successor of Nazi imperialism.

Conquest Without War, however, confutes its own thesis. It is true enough that, if the world had heeded the completely candid announcement of Hitler's strategic intentions, the Third Reich could have been destroyed without serious trouble and World War II avoided. For, though he was a liar in his relations with people, Hitler was completely truthful about his philosophy and his strategy of power. But does Khrushchev resemble him in this respect? Mager and Katel began writing *Conquest Without War* on the assumption that he does and that, out of his own mouth, the world could be warned about the dangers of Soviet imperialism. But by page 507 they have reached a rather different conclusion.

> Reading the words of Nikita Khrushchev alone, one is easily convinced that he is a social reformer bent on creating a better world for its impoverished masses, and that he will succeed.

In order to prove him a villain, in fact, they have to demonstrate that, unlike Adolf Hitler, he does not mean what he says about his strategy and aspirations. So, in the course of writing, their book was turned from a commentary on a text into a dreary and somewhat intellectually dishonest exhibition of counter-propaganda.

In a very different way, *The Red Phoenix* is an equally unsatisfactory work. Harry Schwartz has earned a name as one of the best Sovietologists in postwar journalism. I therefore opened his history of Russia since the war with the liveliest anticipation. But what did I find? Apart from one introduction and one concluding chapter, which read like lectures given to children, Mr. Schwartz has republished a selection of his New York *Times* articles. Since he proudly tells us that he has not had to revise them before publication, his aim, apparently, is to prove that good journalism can, in process of time, become good history.

Alas, it cannot. The justification for the superficiality of the articles we write is precisely that they are written before a considered judgment is possible. Daily newspaper writing is ephemeral, in the strictest sense of that word. It is only valuable as a record of what was known and thought on the day it was written. As a

* Simon and Schuster, 545 pp., $7.50.

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case history, therefore, of the mental evolution of Mr. Schwartz, *The Red Phoenix* may have a certain interest for the student of American journalism. For those of us who want to study Russia, it merely provides an irritating reminder that the author could write a good book if he was prepared to revise his ephemeral judgments in the light of subsequent events.

WHAT LESSONS can we draw from the vast literature which is now being produced about the Soviet Union and, in particular, about Mr. Khrushchev? One thing which pleases any English reader is to observe the complete frankness with which American Sovietologists now admit the facts of Russia's increasing power. The period when American morale was sustained by Dullesian dreams of liberating Eastern Europe from a declining Communist power seems to have passed. Indeed, uncritical optimism is now being replaced by uncritical pessimism. No one, for instance, could call Mr. Schwartz a publicity agent for Russian Communism. Yet here is his assessment of the future:

> Heavy-industrial production in the Soviet Union by 1970 should be far greater than any such output ever produced in the United States to date. The standard of living of Soviet workers by that time should be comparable to that of British and French workers today. There should be little difficulty for the Soviet Union to expend annually several billion dollars for foreign economic aid. And by 1970 or shortly thereafter, the red Soviet flag may wave in solitary grandeur over a manned Soviet base on the moon.

And here is his conclusion about the prospects of democracy:

> The likelihood is that the force and impact of the Soviet example upon the underdeveloped countries will grow at least as rapidly as the growth of Soviet capabilities to supply them with machinery, technical training, and the like. . . . Defeat for the United States in the world struggle is not yet a foregone conclusion.

Neither Mr. Kellen nor Mr. Pistrak is prepared to commit himself to such extravagant pessimism as that. And Mr. Kellen, in his conclusions, seeks to persuade us that the Communist impregnability is not complete:

> Khrushchev's Achilles heel is that he does not understand the Western world. This weakness is compounded by the fact that he thinks he does.

But do *we* understand the Western world any better? That is the perturbing question which keeps nagging at my mind after this dose of Sovietology. For surely it is obvious by now why the world balance of power is shifting so rapidly in favor of the East. The reason for this change is the power of the totalitarian ruler to fix his priorities and to hold back consumption until national requirements are fulfilled. So, too, the reason for the West's ever growing weakness is the inability of a government in a Western democracy to compel the electorate, except in times of war, to accept the requisite scale of austerity. Some optimists believe that, as the Russian standard of living rises, Communists will be compelled to concede to the mass of the people those ultimate decisions that reside with the British and American people. Once again, there is not a single shred of evidence for this delusion. Communist philosophy and Communist practice alike indicate that, in the view of Khrushchev and of anyone who succeeds him, bourgeois democracy is doomed to defeat, precisely because it fails to carry out Rousseau's principle of compelling the people to be free. The totalitarian features of Communism are not a transitory characteristic of a pioneering phase, due to pass away when they are no longer necessary. They are an essential aspect of Communist philosophy, and they will endure in the Communist state until the Kingdom of Heaven comes to earth in the form of the classless society.

When Khrushchev, from his vantage point in the Kremlin, looks out at the Western democracies, he fails to appreci-

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ate the individual freedoms and the subtle, colorful complexities of social life which are their most attractive aspect. What he keeps his eye on is what Hitler kept his eye on—the contradictions and weaknesses inherent in a system of government which denies to the ruler the power to plan the national resources. He is blind to our virtues, but he sees clearly enough the "power factor" which is all that interests him. Khrushchev's certainty of victory is based on a correct appreciation that a Western government only wields national power *when it is at war* and that it can therefore be defeated so long as it can be persuaded to prefer cold war to hot. In a nuclear world, with a nuclear stalemate, he rightly reckons that this persuasion is not very difficult to achieve.

So there we have the cardinal difference between the Nazi and the Communist. For Hitler, war was the highest activity in human life and warmaking the supreme test of the leader, of the state, and of the people. To concede to Hitler the fruits of war without war itself was to deny him the supreme expression of Aryan humanity. Khrushchev sees war in a very different light. As a Communist, he is certain that the future, which belongs to Russia and her allies, can only be denied them by a nuclear *Götterdämmerung*. War, in his view, is an irrational, unpredictable process, resort to which is a mark of political failure. And he believes fanatically that, whereas it would restore unity and strength to the distracted and divided Western democracies, it could do nothing but retard his own plans.

From all of which I draw this one conclusion. In order to win the cold war, we should concentrate our attention not on the internal stresses of the Soviet Union but on the weaknesses and inherent contradictions in our own system, of which Khrushchev is very well aware.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Civil Defense for Americans—
The Case for: HERMAN KAHN
The Case against: ERICH FROMM & MICHAEL MACCOBY

Sketches of Jewish Life in Warsaw ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER
Writing for the Movies DANIEL FUCHS
The 20th Century in its Philosophy WILLIAM BARRETT
Books for Jewish Children ROBERT ALTER
The Philosophy of Foreign Aid HANS J. MORGENTHAU

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ELIE WIESEL

EICHMANN'S VICTIMS AND THE UNHEARD TESTIMONY

Last month, we published an article by Harold Rosenberg which attempted to determine how far the Eichmann Trial had achieved its main purpose—that of telling the world the story of what actually happened to the European Jews under the Nazis. Here ELIE WIESEL*—the author of the much praised* Night, *a memoir of his imprisonment as an adolescent boy in Auschwitz and Buchenwald—asks whether the trial did justice to Eichmann's victims. Mr. Wiesel, a new contributor to these pages, was born in Hungary in 1928, and educated after the war at the Sorbonne in Paris. Since 1956 he has been living in New York, where he serves as foreign correspondent for the Tel Aviv paper* Yediot Ahronot; *he is also on the staff of the* Jewish Daily Forward. *An English translation of his novel,* Dawn *(originally written in French, as was also the present article), was recently published by Hill & Wang, and another novel,* Le Jour, *is now in process of being translated.*

Mr. Wiesel's article will be followed next month by a piece analyzing the impact the Eichmann Trial has had on American public opinion.

THE TRIAL of Eichmann at Jerusalem may be called historic insofar as it aimed not merely at judging the crimes and moral degradation of a single individual—or even of a system—but at trying to define more clearly a whole epoch of our history. That epoch, up to now, has eluded all human understanding—so inhumanly blind were its drives, so terrible their consequences.

Not one, but two peoples were transformed: the one into the murderers, the other into the silent horde of the murdered. How was it possible? we still ask sixteen years later. How was an Eichmann possible? We ask the question in anguish—we are in the dark, still. How explain away so total a triumph of beastliness over man, and at the expense of the destruction of a whole people? How, and why? At a certain point in the asking, the why and the how come together, indistinguishably.

Those of us who looked to the trial for an answer to these questions looked in vain. I asked Alfred Kazin one day if he thought the death of six million Jews could have any meaning; and he replied that he hoped not. There can, indeed, be no answer naked enough, or real enough. But the trial should at the very least have shaped the question, should at least have revealed the cry inside the question that will echo through all time. . . . Simply to condemn Eichmann was not enough; not even, in fact, possible. The enormity, call it even the absurdity, of his acts, transcended his person and placed him outside of temporal justice. The laws of living men could not judge him—only the dead could confront him. It was this that often made the trial seem unreal: that the principal characters, Eichmann foremost, appeared actually to be at ease in their respective roles, as if they had come together in the usual kind of judicial proceeding, the ordinary sort of trial where a man is being judged by his peers. Not so: not he, not Eichmann was being tried, but History. The accused Eichmann spoke freely, unafraid. He cited documents and figures, he held back nothing—he was desperately bent on saving his neck. Thus he often

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succeeded in giving a false emphasis to the proceedings. Yet we all know that it was not Eichmann's neck that was really at stake. The case of Eichmann—symbol as well as individual—had to be judged in the domain of psychiatry and metaphysics, and not only by the processes of law.

It was precisely this kind of larger scope that the trial never achieved, as critics of the proceedings have pointed out. The beam of light that it threw did not encompass enough and therefore failed to uncover all the dark horizons. And if the focus of the trial was too narrow, the reason was that the proceedings got stuck inside the rules of the legal game. The accused should have constituted the point of departure—he was, instead, the end in sight. So the equation was necessarily falsified: if, before the law, the Eichmanns are guilty, the others, therefore, are innocent. But the truth leads to a different conclusion: the others are guilty, too.

All of us, I believe, in varying degrees must take responsibility for what happened in Europe—Curzio Malaparte and even Karl Jaspers have pointed this out. We belong to a generation at once lost and guilty, and our collective conscience lies under a weight of humiliation. It is too easy to put the whole brunt on a single Eichmann: to do so is to evade coming face to face with the problem. No one ever doubted Eichmann's guilt; everyone was convinced of it from the start, and no trial was needed for proof. If the trial was important—and I for one believe it was—it was because by reviving the past it was able to demonstrate how a crime could spill over and outward, and splash its guilt onto those who thought themselves to be standing at a safe distance. If the grandiose proceedings had failed to teach this lesson, they would have been not useless, but incomplete.

FUTURE HISTORIANS will find plenty of gaps in the Eichmann Trial: the research will have to go on. Contrary to what we had every right to expect, the brief of particulars kept within the narrow concerns of the accused, of him who was actually standing trial. The role played in the annihilation program by all humanity—Nazified or otherwise—was brought up only in passing.

Yet, we all know that the Germans could never have succeeded in solving the "Jewish Question" with such speed and efficiency if it had not been for the help and tacit consent of the Ukrainians, Slovaks, Poles, Hungarians. The Slovaks paid for every person the Germans took out of their country; the Hungarians put pressure on Eichmann—who was by no means lacking in enthusiasm himself—to speed up the transports; the Letts and Ukrainians in their cruelty surpassed the Germans themselves; and as for the Poles, it was not by accident that the worst concentration camps were set up in Poland, worse than anywhere else.

But it is a well-established fact that wherever the local population was opposed to the deportation of their Jewish fellow citizens, the "yield" was poor—unsatisfactory to the Nazis. Eichmann himself emphasized this point in the confessions he made to the journalist Wilhelm Sassen, at Buenos Aires. In Denmark, almost the total Jewish population was saved. And because the Nazis could not get wide support for their anti-Jewish measures from the people of France, Belgium, or Holland, Eichmann's henchmen did not do very well in those countries either—to the bitter disgust of the authorities at Berlin, it is known. Only where the indigenous populations were themselves eager to become *"Judenrein"* did the cattle trains with their suffocating human cargo roll swiftly into the night. This very important fact was hardly touched on at the Jerusalem trial.

Nor did the indictment at Jerusalem dwell much on the failure of the whole outside world, which looked on in a kind of paralysis and passively allowed whatever was being done to be done. The number—six million Jews murdered—

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could never have been reached if the voices of Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Pope had been more distinctly heard. If the Germans took the precautions they did to cover up their bloody deeds, it was because they were not indifferent to world opinion. In the confessions at Buenos Aires which I cited above, Eichmann notes—with amusement—that even if, through Joel Brand, he had managed to put up a million Jews for sale, there was not a single country which would have bought them. The indifference of our civilized world allowed the Germans a free hand: go ahead, do what seems best to you with your Jews, we see nothing.

By 1942, Washington, London, and, yes, Jerusalem, too, were aware of what was going on, and Hitler and Goebbels on their side were expecting an avalanche of angry protestations. When none came, they understood: they had been given a free hand by the Western powers.

In the Jerusalem courtroom, correspondence between Chaim Weizmann and the British Foreign Office was offered in evidence: it spoke of a simple, touching favor that Weizmann had asked for: would His Majesty's government give the order to the Royal Air Force to bomb the railway tracks to Auschwitz? The answer was no. It is known that a similar request was addressed to President Roosevelt by one of the American Jewish leaders who had an entrée to the White House. As we also know, Roosevelt did nothing about it.

Is it not strange—let us use only that word—that the civilized world waited until it was too late before expressing its moral indignation, waited until there were scarcely any Jews left to be saved?

AND FINALLY, in order to keep inviolate the historical truth, the Prosecutor should have removed the last taboo: to reveal the sorry but nonetheless ineluctable fact that the Jews themselves failed to do everything they should have done: they ought to have done more, they could have done better. The American Jewish community never made adequate use of its political and financial powers; certainly it did not move heaven and earth, as it should have. We know the reasons and the justifications: they are not good enough. There can be no justification, nor any explanation for passivity when an effort had to be made to save five to ten thousand Jews from murder each day. Just how many meetings were there at Madison Square Garden, and how many demonstrations in front of the White House? To think of how few, makes one's blood run cold.

In Palestine, the situation was hardly different. In Palestine, heart and conscience of the Jewish people, the means had not yet been found as late as the end of 1944 to give warning, or help if necessary, to the dense centers of Europe's Jewish populations, over which death already hovered. By the time the few parachutists had landed in Budapest (with what results we learned from the Kastner trial) there was nothing they could do: half of Europe had been emptied of Jews. Why had agents not been sent over from Palestine sooner, with or without parachutists' uniforms? Yes, we know that there was the war in Palestine, but the young men of Palmach would gladly have volunteered to go. Ten, maybe only five, out of a hundred volunteers might have reached their destination in Europe; even those ten or five could have organized resistance, escape, rescues.

One of the war's most unforgivable incidents occurred when the Hungarian Jews from Transylvania were deported to Auschwitz. Their mass deportation took place in May–June of 1944, just a few days before the landing at Normandy. Arriving at the Auschwitz station, they still had no idea of what lay in wait for them; they were ignorant of the very name of the place, they had not heard of the horrors it concealed from them. Had they known, they could have made a dash for it, been saved. Not all, maybe, but the great majority. Mountains surrounded the

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area, and the Jews might have fled into these mountains and hidden out for a while. The Red Army had advanced to within eighteen to twenty miles from Auschwitz, and at night the rumbling of their guns could be distinctly heard. It was only a matter of a few days before the liberators would appear. But these pious Jews of Transylvania were told that they had nothing to fear, that they were only being transferred further inland—were told and believed, for there was no one to tell them anything else.

This took place, I repeat, in the spring of 1944, by the time every child in Brooklyn, in Whitechapel, and in Tel Aviv knew that Treblinka and Birkenau were something other than the names of provincial little railway stations.

And yet to Joel Brand's urgent solicitation for an interview so that he might make known his doubly tragic mission, Chaim Weizmann replied, through his secretary, that he was at the moment too busy to see Brand, that he would be able to receive him in a couple of weeks. Brand had made it clear, in his letter to Weizmann, that every hour counted; every passing day meant the lives of at least ten thousand Jews. How did Brand not go stark raving mad? That in itself remains, for me, one of the great enigmas—the enigma of man's will to survive his damnation.

The terrible fact is that Weizmann's response reflected an attitude widespread among the Jews of Palestine. An attitude, I dare to say, of an inconceivable detachment. People in Palestine behaved as if what was happening *over there* did not concern them too much. In his memoirs, Yitzchak Grunebaum, who was at one time head of a Rescue Commission, tells how the question came up again and again among his colleagues of whether they had the right, in order to try to save European Jews, to use money earmarked for the building up of Palestine. Grunebaum himself thought absolutely not: first came the Land of Israel, then the Diaspora. The Yishuv's houses, factories, schools, must take priority.

One afternoon during the trial of Eichmann, a young Israeli poet, Haim Gouri, left the courthouse on an impulse. He went to the archives to look through the old Tel Aviv newspapers of 1943–44. He came back shocked. "I don't understand," he said to me. "If you knew the things that were bothering us here, while *that* was going on in Europe. . . . Front page headlines: Municipal elections at Hedera—or some other place. . . . And stuck away in a corner of an inside page, an item of a couple of lines: The Germans have begun the extermination of the Jews in the Ghetto of Lublin, or Lodz. . . ."

It was of course not the people's fault, but the fault of their leaders who evinced a surprising lack of initiative, of political maturity, and of courage. Nahum Goldmann acknowledged as much not long ago during a meeting in Geneva of the Executive Committee of the World Jewish Congress. The major Jewish organizations seemed incapable of surmounting their internal bickerings in order to achieve unity of action. The Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People during the entire time it existed was boycotted by U.S. Jewish leaders. But if these leaders had their good reasons for not wishing to collaborate with this one or that one on the outside—and I daresay they did have their good reasons—why didn't they set up their own Committee of Rescue, one which could represent all the organizations? This they did not do.

Therefore, it seems to me, for the trial to have been conducted on its right moral plane—the plane of absolute truth—the Prosecutor, Gideon Hausner (or Ben Gurion himself as Witness), should have bowed his head and cried out in a voice loud enough to be heard by three generations: Before judging others, let us look into our own errors, our own weaknesses. We never attempted the impossible

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—we never even exhausted the possible.

It might be said that with the advent of the Nazi regime in Germany, humanity became witness to what Martin Buber would call an eclipse of God. As if from a mighty curse, strong men and weak men, cowards and those who had been wont to see clearly, were to find themselves guilty in an association with Evil, if from no other cause than that they were living inside the same moment in history. All actions became sullied. Generous spirits fell asleep, distinguished sensibilities were dulled, powerful voices were silenced. The general apathy created the climate in which the criminals on all sides could proceed quietly and efficiently, without disturbance of any kind, and without affected shame.

When the German surrender came, the civilized world uttered a great cry of horror but still shrank from coming to any closer grips with the problem. It wasn't I, was the popular refrain heard, and especially in what had been the Third Reich. Elsewhere, people were content to shed a tear, and declare, "We had nothing to do with it."

To be sure, Karl Jaspers set himself the task of investigating the "German guilt," but with the specific intention of thereby demonstrating the—universal guilt. As a result, his investigation succeeded in allaying many fears in occupied Germany, in reassuring many uneasy minds. Did this not show, on the part of the German philosopher, a flagrant lack of humility? The non-Nazi world had to be allotted its share of the guilt—but this should have been the task and the duty of the intellectuals of New York or of Stockholm. The world, indeed, had more than a few lessons to learn—but not from a German professor.

In Western Europe, the reaction was to be found mainly in works of literature. Sartre, Camus, Gabriel Marcel, going to Malraux for their theme, stressed action and commitment: everything which happens around us, they proclaimed, involves us directly and necessarily. Yet, in these writings, the question was still not probed deeply enough. The hero of the modern novel, absorbed in expressing his protest, overlooks the nuances. A man was good or bad, a resister or a collaborator, or indifferent. The lines were drawn, the camps strictly defined. Whoever had blown up a train could sleep the sleep of the just, or of the proud, or the happy. The others were, in this degree or that, vile, *salaud*. The sense of guilt played very little part in the determination of the European youth to build a new future out of the ruins around them. The arts—with the exception of painting—seemed to have hardly any interior connection with the terrible events which should have furnished their inspiration. No new philosophy was engendered, nor any new religion: the earth had trembled and men had stayed the same.

It is reported that André Gide once told an anti-Semitic story. And when one of his disciples, blushing, reproached him: "You, too, Master?"—Gide started to cry. "I did not know that I was," he said. That was before the war. Afterwards, Gide did not cry. He had given up being witty at the expense of the Jews, so he no longer needed to feel guilty. . . .

It is by a strange irony of fate that the only ones who were, who still are, fully conscious of their share of responsibility for the dead are those who were saved, the ghosts who returned from the dead. They do not feel this through any concept of original sin; they are Jews, they do not believe in original sin. The idea that rules them is more immediate, more agonizing, a part of their very being.

Why did you not revolt? Why did you not resist? You were a thousand against ten, against one. Why did you let yourselves, like cattle, be led to the slaughter?

DURING THE early days of the Eichmann Trial, the Prosecutor tormented various witnesses with questions like these. His desire was to throw light on obscure parts of the drama for the

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benefit of the young generation of Israelis. But the witnesses invariably replied: You cannot know—whoever was not there cannot understand.

Two well-known psychiatrists who *were* there, Bruno Bettelheim and Victor Frankel, have attempted to give some explanation in their books dealing with the psychology of the concentration camp. The mystery of the victim's acceptance occupied them as much as the question of the executioner's cruelty. But to attribute that acceptance—as they do—to the disintegration of the personality, or to the rising up of the "death wish," or to something in Jewish tradition, can only be a partial explanation. The metaphysical *why* is still lacking. Nor is any account taken of the kind of guilt which had been implanted in the prisoners.

The feeling of guilt was, to begin with, essentially a religious feeling. If I am here, it is because God is punishing me; I have sinned, and I am expiating my sins. I have deserved this punishment that I am suffering. The revolt against God comes later—it is the final stage. First, the prisoner sacrifices his own freedom for God's. He prefers to believe himself guilty rather than think that his God is the God of Job, for whom man is a mere example—a means of demonstrating a thesis in a verbal duel with Satan.

As each passing day took him farther and farther away from his freedom, the prisoner's sense of guilt sharpened, pressed closer on his conscience. He was, in fact, only following a line of reaction which had been drawn for him by his jailers who, in the ghettos and in the camps, had known precisely—shrewdly—how to push to its extreme limit the emotion of shame and humiliation which he who is still alive normally experiences toward the dead.

I am alive, therefore I am guilty. If I am still here, it is because a friend, a comrade, a stranger, died in my place. Within a closed world, this certitude has a destructive power whose effects are easy to imagine. If to live means to accept or engender injustice, to die quickly becomes a promise and a deliverance.

The system of *Lebensschein* in the ghettos and of *Selekzion* in the camps not only periodically decimated the populations, but also worked on each prisoner to say to himself: "That could have been me, I am the cause, perhaps the condition, of someone else's death."

In this way the *Lebensschein* came to stand for a moral torture . . . a prison without exits. One of the witnesses at the trial was a man who had been a doctor in Vilna, and his testimony was terribly moving. Recently married, he had succeeded in obtaining a "living permit" and was working in a German factory. He was told he could save one close relative, and he went to his mother to ask her: "What shall I do? Whom shall I save? You—or my wife?" A man forced to make such a choice, to become a concrete instrument of destiny, thereafter lives in a suffocating circle of hell; and whenever his thoughts turn to himself, it is in anger and in disgust. If André Schwarz-Bart's hero, Ernie Levy, finally decided to take the train for Auschwitz, it was neither out of love, nor out of pity, but from the conviction that humanity had come to such a pass of evil that no one could continue to live who wished to remain just.

REDUCED TO A mere number, the man in the concentration camp at the same time lost his identity and his individual destiny. He came to realize that his presence in the camp was due solely to the fact that he was part of a forgotten and condemned collectivity. It is not written: I shall live or die, but: *someone*—today—will vanish, or will continue to suffer; and from the point of view of the collective, it makes no difference whether that someone is I or another. Only the number, only the quota counts. Thus, the one who had been spared, above all during the "selections," could not repress his first spontaneous reflex of joy. A moment, a week, or an eternity later, this joy

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weighted with fear and anxiety will turn into—guilt. *I am happy to have escaped death* becomes equivalent to admitting: *I am glad that someone else went in my place*. It was in order not to think about this that the prisoners so very quickly managed to forget their comrades or their relatives: those who had been selected. They forgot them quickly—trying to shut their eyes to the reproachful glances which still floated in the air around them.

Why did the Jews in the camps not choose a death with honor, knife in hand and hate on their lips? It is understandable that Bruno Bettelheim should wonder why. Putting aside the technical and psychological reasons which made any attempt at revolt impossible (the Jews knew that they had been sacrificed, forgotten, crossed off by humanity), to answer we must consider the moral aspects of the question. The Jews, conscious of the curse weighing them down, came to believe that they were neither worthy nor capable of an act of honor. To die struggling would have meant a betrayal of those who had gone to their death submissive and silent. The only way was to follow in their footsteps, die their kind of death—only then could the living make their peace with those who had already gone.

There comes to mind another case, also presented before the court at Jerusalem: the case of the woman who, naked and wounded, had managed to escape from the ditch, the mass grave in which all the Jews of her town were mowed down by German machine guns. That woman returned to the ditch after a little while to rejoin the phantasmagoric community of corpses. Miraculously saved, she still could not accept a life which in her eyes had become impure.

It is not known yet what the psychiatrists uncovered who examined Adolf Eichmann at great length, before and after his trial. Surely Eichmann's victims —those who are alive, that is—ought to be examined. Only, these ghosts maintain against us an oppressive silence which they brought back with them from over there. They refuse to open up. One thing that is not known is that they are afraid of their own voices. Their tragedy is the tragedy of Job before his submission: they believe themselves to be guilty, though they are not. Only a Great Judge would have it in his power to rid them of this burden. But in their eyes no one possesses either such authority or such power: no one, either human or divine.

Therefore they prefer, in this condemned world, not to hurl their defiance at men and their anger into the face of history, but to keep silent, to pursue the monologue which only the dead deserve to hear. Guilt was not invented at Auschwitz, it was disfigured there.

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"THE LONG REVOLUTION" AND THE BRITISH LEFT

LEO MARX

AMERICANS WHO do not follow the debates of the British left may find it difficult to understand why *The Long Revolution** caused such a stir in England. At first it was almost universally praised. But Richard Wollheim argued against it in his Fabian tract, *Socialism and Culture,*† and Dwight Macdonald denounced it in the pages of *Encounter,* and now the argument has spread to other journals with the result that *The Long Revolution* has become one of the most discussed books of the year. It has got this attention, moreover, in spite of being written in a ponderous, murky style—quite a step down from Mr. Williams's relatively lucid writing in *Culture and Society* (1958). What is the reason for all the excitement? My impression, after reading a few of the favorable reviews, is that in some perverse way *The Long Revolution* has touched the hearts of discouraged British socialists.

I say perverse way because in the book Mr. Williams makes the point-blank assertion that socialism in England "has almost wholly lost any contemporary meaning." Yet perhaps by now British socialists are prepared to accept this fact.** For several years they have been trying to resolve certain irrepressible doubts about the continuing relevance of socialist ideas. Has the welfare state actually provided enough of what socialists always have wanted? Of what use, after all, is a theory of society designed as an alternative to crude capitalism now that that form of capitalism no longer exists? It is true that Macmillan's England is a far cry from the socialist ideal, but given the world situation how would socialists improve matters? What finally comes through all the bright talk of recent years is a profound uncertainty about the present rationale for socialism.

Among the many efforts to cope with this problem, C. A. R. Crosland's exhaustive analysis, *The Future of Socialism* (1955), exemplifies the bland, wistful tone of the British left nowadays. Yes, says Crosland, we still need socialism, but his voice carries none of the old-fashioned fervor. Nor does his program have anything like the doctrinal clarity of the old slogans, the forthright demand, say, for public ownership of the means of production. Assuming (somewhat hastily, one suspects) that England is on the threshold of mass abundance, Crosland puts aside the problems of economic growth and efficiency as no longer of primary concern. He regards the past and potential achievements of the welfare state as obviating the need for a radical change in the economic structure. The trouble is that once socialists take this position, and many do, they quickly lose their political identity. If they no longer believe there is anything fundamentally wrong with the economic system or, to use orthodox Marxian terminology, the "relations of production," then what is the distinctive feature of their creed?

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* *The Long Revolution,* by Raymond Williams (Columbia University Press, 370 pp., $5.00).

† *Socialism and Culture,* by Richard Wollheim (The Fabian Society, 48 pp., 4/6).

** As I write, there are signs that the Labor party, assembled for its annual conference at Blackpool, may be coming back to life.

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British socialists have come up with a number of possible answers to this nagging question. Crosland, for example, sees Britain as moving toward what he considers a good society, but not fast enough. Accordingly he ends up with a program aimed at more welfare, greater equality, more liberty and gaiety in private life, and what he calls "cultural and amenity planning." However sensible this solution may be, it is hardly exciting. It offers no sharp ideological focus, no opportunity for moral indignation, no enemy to replace the capitalist of old. Only toward the close of his book does Crosland veer toward another approach that is becoming increasingly popular among intellectuals. This is to say that socialism now is just as necessary as it ever was, but in order to fulfill cultural rather than material needs. After all, the classic indictment of capitalism always has been double-edged: it rejects the system as inefficient and in the long run unworkable, but quite apart from economic criteria, it rejects capitalism as fundamentally immoral. Extending the second charge, many socialists today contend that under capitalism, no matter how productive, the "general quality of life" will remain so mediocre that only a total reorganization of society can improve it. What is needed, in short, is a socialist culture.

But the difficulty is that no one quite knows exactly what these words mean. What would or should a socialist culture be like? Unfortunately, there is almost no doctrine in the scriptures of the left to draw upon, even as a starting point. (Marxists tend to see the whole realm of culture as of secondary importance, a superstructure built upon an economic foundation.) But it is unlikely that any theory developed in the 19th-century, along with the main body of socialist ideas, would be of much use in the era of mass communications. In this sphere, accordingly, a host of puzzling questions arise. Should socialists, as majoritarians, identify themselves with "mass culture"? Union leaders might say yes, but that would offend intellectuals who share the violent antagonism toward popular culture which pervades the best of modern art and literature. Should socialists then contrive to identify with the audience and apparatus, but not the standards, of mass culture? Or should they, as Trotsky urged, concentrate on perpetuating the best of "bourgeois culture"? Exactly what is wrong with our stratified contemporary culture anyway? It is all very well for highbrow literary types to sneer at the *kitsch* on the television screen if they share the political values of T. S. Eliot. But a socialist must face the fact that the great audience is not complaining. Nor does it seem helpful to try to preserve—or revive—a "working-class culture" which may have existed once, but now is disappearing. With the exception of Richard Hoggart, who does look closely at the evidence in his remarkable book, *The Uses of Literacy*, most people who talk about "working-class culture" do not have anything very specific in mind. As used today the term often sounds less like a sociological category than a poetic fancy obscurely associated with George Orwell, the novels of D. H. Lawrence, and second-hand impressions of masculine comradery down in the mine. In his final chapter, Hoggart reluctantly concludes that England is "becoming culturally classless." If election returns are any indication, he is correct; most Englishmen nowadays do not like being identified with the "working class" or even, for that matter, with "Labor."

Meanwhile, in the pages of the *New Statesman* and kindred journals, the discussion of socialism and culture goes on and on, sounding each week just a bit more like an 18th-century theological controversy; except that now, instead of having to grasp countless redefinitions of free will, foreknowledge, justification, and grace, one must try to hold on to all the slippery variations of the culture concept: culture, mass; culture, general; culture, working-class—bourgeois, high, low, capitalist, socialist, and so forth. Reading the British left on this subject one cannot help feeling that the whole stream of socialist thought in the West is drying up—running rapidly into a desert of abstractions and just plain words, words, words.

Is it any wonder, then, that Labor party intellectuals are ready to listen to Raymond Williams when he says, in effect, let's toss all this verbal baggage out the window and find a new way of looking at our situation? That at least seems to explain the initial appeal of this provocative book. *The Long Revolution* is effective in its assault upon obsolete assumptions, but I hasten to

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add that Mr. Williams does not take us very far down the road he thinks we should travel. It is one thing to say that we need to rid ourselves of an outworn vocabulary of social thought, but it is quite another to invent a new one. Besides, one gets the feeling that Mr. Williams, whose own background is working-class, has very little confidence in the power of ideas to encompass "real life." He is suspicious of the motives of intellectuals, and in his view of the past, ideas tend to be mere rationalizations.

The Long Revolution is divided into three parts. In the first part Mr. Williams expounds some unorthodox opinions about the relation between creative activity and society. Yet "relation" is the wrong word, since it so strongly emphasizes that initial separation of the self from the community, minds from objects, which Mr. Williams would play down. (In a sense the entire book may be read as an attack upon this ruling, dualistic assumption of modern European culture.) He says that we will not be able to think constructively about the problems of culture until we abandon the oversimplified, dualistic model of communications we have been using since the 17th century. In his view the model itself is a product of temporary historic conditions, and by now it is dangerously outmoded. (Here his forte, as in *Culture and Society*, is demonstrating the particular circumstances affecting the genesis of categories we use uncritically.) Nowadays we are in the habit of rewarding creativity as the product of an opposition between the individual and his society. But in fact, says Mr. Williams, the true source of our power is collective, not individual. So far from being "natural," then, the familiar tension between artists or intellectuals and the rest of the community is a kind of neurotic projection. Because it forms the very lens we use to record the past, we get a distorted picture of all earlier culture. In a sample analysis of Britain in the 1840's, he therefore is at pains to reveal the continuity rather than the tension between the arts and other modes of social behavior. He finds a common pattern of thought and feeling in politics, business, technology, religion, and literature.

Accordingly, Mr. Williams proposes to revamp our entire historical method. His point is that if we turn to the past seeking evidence of the gulf between private and public experience, that is of course what we will find; but if we look for the subtle connections between all contemporary modes of expression, we will find what is even more important and more useful. First, however, we must accept his major premise: the essential *wholeness* of culture embracing the one and the many, thought and action, and at the highest level of abstraction, the subject and object. If we do so, the truly significant theme of modern history will become plain. It is not the alienation of the tortured individual that counts, but the massive, revolutionary thrust of anonymous people, the "general growth of humanity."

WHAT MR. WILLIAMS is attacking, in a word, is individualism. Our confusion, he says, follows from the notion that there ever was or ever could be such a thing as a single, bare human being—the metaphysical Robinson Crusoe, as it were, of modern thought. In place of this false abstraction, he invites us to begin all of our thinking with an actual community, a total social organism antecedent to any individual and the true source of his mode of perception. His mind is bound to other minds, and to external (or institutional) patterns of behavior by what Mr. Williams calls a "structure of feeling." Unfortunately this key concept, which he apparently borrowed from anthropology, remains somewhat vague. (In many ways it resembles Ruth Benedict's "pattern of culture.") The notion of a common "structure of feeling" is crucial to the argument of *The Long Revolution* because it serves to divest the private consciousness of its significance. The cult of the self is Mr. Williams's adversary; it is for him the center of all resistance to the communitarian ethos inherent in the "long revolution." Unlike most literary men nowadays, Williams is sympathetic to the positive feelings of working people toward industrialism. He recognizes that they hardly can be expected to deplore the loss of an individualistic style of life they never knew.

Having cleared the ground of false premises, Mr. Williams takes a close look in the second part of the book at the evolution of several British cultural institutions, such as the educational system, the reading public, the popular press, and Standard English.

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What he says about the educational system is characteristic of the entire pattern. In theory the egalitarian principles of the "long revolution" now have been accepted in Britain; all members of society are accorded the right to be educated. But in practice the system still is based on the existence of a limited ruling class, a middle professional class, and a large operative class. If the promise of democratic education has not been realized, says Mr. Williams, that is because it really never has been tried. The same argument applies to all phases of contemporary British culture. That the "long revolution" has failed is an illusion; its main thrust has been blocked by hostile groups and, even more serious, by the lingering of outmoded individualistic habits of thought. Since the revolution is on the whole just, good, and necessary, the only thing to do now is get on with it.

The third part of *The Long Revolution,* a description of "Britain in the 1960's," is intended to show the unsatisfactoriness of the unfinished revolution. England today is a half-democracy. Although the economic system no longer fits the old definition of capitalism, the patterns of behavior promoted by a market economy never have been stronger. Hence, he argues, the political opposition lacks vigor; the labor movement is suffering a "visible moral decline"; the Labor party is rapidly becoming a mere "alternate power-group"; and the traditional idea of a socialist society, featuring economic well-being, now seems totally irrelevant. Here, in short, is a culture which has lost its bearings.

Now many people doubtless share Mr. Williams's desire for a renewal of revolutionary commitment, a new drive for more democracy in the economy, in politics, and in culture. But everywhere this desire has run into terrible contradictions. Democratization of culture, for example, seems to be at odds with quality—the maintenance of standards. Meanwhile, the mainspring of democratic politics, the urge of people "to make their own decisions," has come to seem irreconcilable with the demands of the immense technological apparatus for central planning and control. An important factor here, and incidentally one which Mr. Williams scarcely mentions, is the loss of vigor suffered by the British left in the general mobilization of society in the cold war against other, newer revolutionary forces. In any event, the movement toward democratic socialism has bogged down, and the result is a futile churning of stale ideas.

AT THIS POINT in the ulterior logic of the book, Mr. Williams offers frustrated socialists a "way out." Convinced that their doubts and confusions arise from the twisted description of history they carry in their heads, he attempts to replace it with one of his own. So far as he is a historian, Mr. Williams's purpose is somehow to get back of the paralyzing contradictions faced by progressive thinkers and make possible a renewal of revolutionary, democratic faith. In my view, this is a perfectly legitimate and indeed praiseworthy motive for a historical enterprise. I only wish that the method were as commendable as the intention. But, alas, the method consists largely of abandoning the seemingly outmoded terminology of socialist discourse, with its sharp distinctions between kinds of social organization (feudalism, capitalism, socialism, etc.), and banking everything, instead, on a crude, portmanteau description of the entire modern era as dominated by one, total *long revolution.*

With these two words he would call to mind all of the complicated changes in our "whole way of life" since the late 18th century. He would have us see the emergence of political democracy, industrial production, and all of the new modes of communication (leading toward a "common culture") as parts of a single process arising from a single source. The source, so far as one can tell, is an inchoate impulse not unlike the egalitarian urge which Tocqueville discovered at the heart of American institutions in the 1830's. It is to be found in the determination of the working people to govern themselves, to satisfy their material needs, and to gain equal access to the benefits (if not the responsibilities) of literacy, education, and the mass production of mental commodities. Mr. Williams's theory of history is holistic. It provides socialists who have lost confidence in what was once thought to be a rational method of political analysis with a new object of trust, namely, those shapeless, massive energies back of the modern revolution. Throughout the book

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Mr. Williams insists that "we cannot understand the process of change in which we are involved if we limit ourselves to thinking of the democratic, industrial, and cultural revolutions as separate processes." We must, he says, "keep trying to grasp the process as a whole."

At first thought there is something wonderfully refreshing about this kind of simplification. Of course it is true that all of these developments interact. Life would be much easier if we could think about them as if they all comprised one change leading in one direction—as if they all had the same consequences. Well, says Mr. Williams, in that event why not try it? Why must we be so doggedly critical of what is inescapable?

> A very large part of our intellectual life, to say nothing of our social practice, is . . . devoted to criticizing the long revolution, in this or that aspect, by many powerful selective techniques. But as the revolution itself extends, until nobody can escape it, this whole drift seems increasingly irrelevant. In naming the great process of change the long revolution, I am trying to learn assent to it, an adequate assent of mind and spirit. I find increasingly that the values and meanings I need are all in this process of change.

This touching passage reminds me of *The Education of Henry Adams,* especially Adams's discovery of the crushing, deterministic power of modern technology that day "he found himself lying in the Gallery of Machines at the Great Exposition of 1900, his historical neck broken by the irruption of forces totally new." Adams tells how, standing there among the forty-foot dynamos, he began to think of them as a moral force and how before long he felt an impulse to pray to it. So with Mr. Williams and the force of the "long revolution." If the usual, critical methods of the intellect will not yield the desired affirmation, he seems to be saying, we must nevertheless find a way to "learn . . . assent of mind and spirit." Running through *The Long Revolution* there is a soft, vaguely anti-rational undertone that is particularly disquieting if we take the book as in any sense a gauge of the present climate of opinion in England. At times Mr. Williams seems to be in search of a tidy deterministic explanation. To be sure, there is nothing irrational about accommodating oneself to the inevitable. But playing with loose definitions of the inevitable is one of the more treacherous intellectual pastimes. Besides, how can Mr. Williams say that criticism of the "long revolution" is irrelevant? Irrelevant to what? Perhaps he means futile. After all, criticism of an irreversible trend may always be relevant to one's own notion of what it means to be human.

THE CURIOUS FACT of the matter, in any case, is that Mr. Williams shares the almost universal impulse to criticize and resist. This is revealed by his fine novel, *Border Country,* which was published in England last year but has not yet appeared here. The book is written from the point of view of a young economic historian who teaches in London. At the outset he is called back to Wales, where he grew up, to attend his dying father. A series of flashbacks recreates the father's life. He has been a railroad worker, an inarticulate, self-contained, proud man who stubbornly has refused every opportunity to get on the status ladder. With the manly dignity of a D. H. Lawrence working-class hero, say Mellors, he creates a life out of his own feelings. Unlike the game-keeper, however, he is sustained by what remains of a genuine community. He derives satisfaction from his friends, his family, his job, his regional loyalties, his gardening, which has complex ritualistic overtones, and above all from his uncompromising defense of the self. Like *Lady Chatterly's Lover* or George Orwell's too little known *Coming Up for Air, Border Country* joins two great English literary modes: the novel and pastoral. The landscape has a decisive symbolic function in the book, and the father's virtues are in large measure the conventional virtues of the good shepherd. Watching him die, the protagonist realizes the terrible cost of the "long revolution." It is weakening, indeed threatening to destroy, all of those bonds with the community which gave him his identity. At the end nothing like an adequate substitute for that community is in view. *Border Country* is written with only the faintest trace of sentimentality, yet the main flow of feeling in the novel runs counter to the whole movement of history to which Mr. Williams now would have us assent. That is why it is difficult to trust him completely when he asserts

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that the values and meanings he needs "are all in this process of change," the "long revolution."

Yet he would claim a kind of consistency here. The hero of *Border Country* may be drawn to the old ways, but he has no illusions about going back. (The whole situation is enriched by the fact that one aspect of the local history of industrialization is his special field of research.) He knows that the old community is finished, and that now the only sensible course is to start building a new one. The worst features of the "long revolution" stem from its incompleteness. What makes the novel poignant, finally, is the precise specification—in all its particular sensory associations—of the intellectual's ambivalence. Enough of this feeling creeps into *The Long Revolution,* moreover, to make it a more human, less doctrinaire, work than I have been able to indicate. Still, one cannot help feeling that it might have been a truly profound book had Mr. Williams been willing to submit his powerful nostalgia to the discipline of his historical intelligence. When it comes to discipline, however, it is the novelist Williams, not the historian, who is willing to submit.

HOW, THEN, does the author of *The Long Revolution* assuage the anxiety he so poignantly expresses in *Border Country?* What enables him to reconcile himself to the destruction of the semi-industrial community? Mr. Williams would have us believe that the main drift of events is leading us (or would be if only we could learn assent) toward a satisfactory "common culture." By this he has in mind a widely shared body of meaning and value that would sustain a more or less homogeneous community of entertainment, art, and letters. It will be neither high nor low, bourgeois nor mass, but it will satisfy the needs of most people. It is the nearest equivalent, in Mr. Williams's system, to the ideal socialist state; it is the terminus of the "long revolution." Having begun with the idea that the psychic root of the "great process of change" is an uncensurable egalitarian impulse, he invests it all with a monolithic benignity.

On reflection, however, the idea of a "common culture" is no more tenable than the idea of the "long revolution" itself. It is an abstraction that transcends but does not resolve contradictions. As Richard Wollheim points out, Mr. Williams simply has failed to take into account the diversity of education, taste, and temperament within an open, complex society. In the idea of a "common culture" readers of *Border Country* will recognize many features of the village life depicted there. It is apparent that Mr. Williams hopes to recapture, for all England, as many as possible of the values and emotional satisfactions of a small, integrated sub-culture. Thus he envisages a large industrial society dominated by a single "structure of feeling." This is an illusion. One is reminded of certain followers of Ruth Benedict who, having seen Zuni behavior reduced to a single "pattern of culture," attempted to do the same for the United States and Britain. But the uncritical application to our problems of anthropological theories derived from the study of tiny, pre-literate cultures can be terribly misleading. What is disturbing about Mr. Williams's ideal is that one can imagine it being realized only in a totalitarian setting, and even then at a relatively low intellectual level. Of course that is not what he wants. But there is something ominous about a call for a "common culture" in an advanced society today, when it would have to be adapted to the network of standardized communications and a war or consumer's economy.

In his highly compressed pamphlet, *Socialism and Culture,* Richard Wollheim defines a more attractive goal. Instead of hankering after cultural unity, which invariably proves to have behind it a nostalgic or reactionary impulse, Wollheim insists on the need for diversity. For him the important aim nowadays is to preserve the cultural rights of minorities no matter how small. Although he fails to make clear the specifically socialist character of the culture he wants, he is persuasive in arguing that our best hope lies in a "plurality of cultures . . . a plural society . . . where various cultures coexist without any special cachet or prestige attaching to one rather than another."

The distance between these cultural ideals suggests the severity of the intellectual crisis in Britain today. Although both men are "socialists," they envisage utterly different kinds of cultures. But for that matter, one gets a sense of unbearable strain from the work of Mr. Williams alone. It is there in

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the contrary pull of *Border Country* and *The Long Revolution*. It is there, above all, in the power of the animus he brings to bear on the idea of the private consciousness itself. If he had no regard for it, no understanding of the conditions which nurture it, one might simply dismiss him as an obtuse theoretician. But in *The Long Revolution* he can write:

> It is very difficult . . . to live in a modern industrial society and not feel the force of the "individual and society" distinction. There is a deeply-felt discontinuity, for most of us, between what we as individuals desire to do, and what, by some apparently mysterious process, actually happens "out there" in society. This feeling is perhaps even stronger now than it was when the sharp distinction was first made. Individuals feel radically insecure when their lives are changed by forces which they cannot easily see or name, and as societies have become larger and more complicated, and as the power to change the environment and real relations within it has greatly multiplied, this insecurity has certainly increased. Such insecurity is a constant source of a particular kind of individualism.

It is obvious that Mr. Williams understands how many of us feel about our society a good part of the time. Yet he manages, before he is done, to convince himself that what he has described here is a false emotion based on a false description of reality. He performs the feat, moreover, with almost no outside help. For the truth is that there are virtually no significant works of modern art or literature or philosophy which do not confirm the authenticity of the feeling described. It seems to be the very essence of the modern spirit. His own novel is suffused by a similar mood of anxious powerlessness. Nevertheless, Mr. Williams insists that our only hope is to override the cringing self, and somehow reaffirm our allegiance to that mysterious process going on out there which he calls the "long revolution." He would have us believe that this can be done without any sacrifice of intelligence.

Today most intellectuals in this country will be skeptical. For one thing, we are all on guard against the dangers of the historicist fallacy. Mr. Williams's commitment to the "long revolution" approaches a faith in an abstraction as treacherous as history itself. On the other hand, most of us appreciate the need he feels to move beyond the sterile ideal of the separate person. Why, then, do we assume that assent to the "long revolution" necessarily involves a sacrifice of intelligence? This is the most disturbing question that Mr. Williams asks. His answer is emphatic. He says that in our culture intelligence has been defined as the activity of the solitary mind confronting the world. And he would add, to give him the last word, that we had best redefine it—and soon.

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OBSERVATIONS

A WEEK IN WARSAW

Lewis A. Coser

FROM THIS SIDE of the Iron Curtain, Communist bloc countries tend to look alike. We have all become accustomed to a model of Communism in which ideology is the single most important distinguishing mark, and perhaps such is indeed the proper model for most members of the Eastern bloc. A mere week's stay in Warsaw, however, is enough to convince one that it does not in the least fit Poland.

When one approaches Warsaw from the countryside the first major building in view is the Palace of Culture, a monstrously ugly wedding-cake structure thirty-two stories high: Russia's unwelcome gift to the people of Warsaw. But driving toward the center of the capital one finds the beautiful Old City, a magnificent recreation of 17th- and 18th-century Warsaw. The Polish capital was almost totally destroyed by the Nazis, and for a time it was seriously proposed to rebuild the city somewhere else in order to avoid the great expense involved in carting away mountains of rubble. The decision finally made, however—and by no one else than the tough Stalinist *apparatchiki* of the Bierut regime—was not only to build the city where it had always been, but to reconstruct it on the model of previous centuries rather than as it had been just before the war. Old drawings and paintings such as the works of Canaletto and other Venetian painters who had depicted Warsaw were patiently and carefully consulted, and on the basis of these, the Old City was reconstructed. All this was done during a period of great scarcity, while often acutely hungry people lived in hovels, desperate for apartments, without such minimal requirements as adequate hospital facilities. The Marxist-Leninist masters of the country saw fit to neglect the laying of its economic foundations for the sake of recreating the visible superstructure of—feudal Poland! It was not workers' apartments, nor even housing for the new bureaucratic upper class that received top priority, but rather the palaces of the old Polish aristocracy in line with a drive to symbolize—for a country whose borderlines had changed drastically and whose capital was shattered beyond recognition—the Polish past. In this way, the fierce love of Poles for their national past imposed activities on the postwar government which from a purely economic point of view were sheer madness. Facts such as these disrupt some of our handier notions about the uniform dynamics of Communism.

Shortly before I arrived in Poland this summer, Adam Schaff, professor of philosophy at Warsaw University, published a series of articles on "The Meaning of Life" which ran in three consecutive issues of the official *Przeglad Kulturalny*. Here are some representative passages:

> As long as people go on dying, suffering, and losing those near to them, questions about the meaning of life are going to be asked. . . . The question: is it worth living? is prompted not only by the inevitability of death which casts a shadow of doubt over all the efforts and labors of the individual . . . it also encourages skepticism: is it worth it? why suffer? . . . In this field the philosopher is more like an ancient sage pondering the problems of human life than a laboratory scientist. It is impossible, unless one accepts absolute moral imperatives . . . to prejudge the individual's answer, that is, make the individual's choice for him—since this is something only he can do. . . . The problem does not consist in overcoming the philosophically speculative "loneliness" of man, but in overcoming, or in certain situations loosening, the strait jacket imposed on the individual by society.

We have here not a French existentialist but the leading exponent of "Marxist-Leninism" in Poland. Once one has seen the palaces of

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Poland's feudal oppressors rebuilt with loving care by the masters of the People's Poland and has read the leading Marxist-Leninist philosopher talking about the need for loosening the strait jacket imposed on individuals by society, one must simply give up the attempt to fit Poland into pre-existing categories.

Poland today is run by a Communist party (officially called the Polish Workers' party) in which few Poles put any trust but which very few would nevertheless be disposed to overthrow. The ranks of this party contain practically no True Believers; it is pragmatic, "other-directed," rather than dogmatic. The moment of truth after Stalin's death, the revelations of Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Russian Communist party, the accession of Gomulka to power backed by the workers from the Zeran factories and the intellectuals of Warsaw—all these combined once and for all to break the back of dogmatic Marxism in Poland. Although many of the liberal concessions granted by Gomulka in 1956 have since been revoked, and the momentarily hopeful atmosphere of five years ago has turned sour, the breakthrough from the dogmatic slumber of the country under Stalinist domination has turned out to be irreversible. In the course of my stay I met men who by need and temperament were fitted to be True Believers; even these—having much in common, in fact, with a good many would-be religious thinkers—were unable to believe.

* * *

DESPITE THE PARAPHERNALIA of parliamentarism and a multi-party system, the government of Poland of course remains a one-party dictatorship. Yet the dictatorship is that of a party which has no "line," and which keeps its ears open to the noises coming from the underlying population. This is not to say that it does not act arbitrarily or in an authoritarian manner; it often does. Writers are censored, professors dismissed from research institutes, people hampered in their movements. But no longer propelled by a single, consistent ideology, the Polish Workers' party is continually on the lookout for popular reactions. It is much disliked, yet desires to be popular. Gomulka was, it seems, genuinely hurt when a number of revisionist intellectuals, finding that their expectations of liberalism after October 1956 were not fulfilled, left the party. "They found it possible to stomach the party under the Stalinists," he is reputed to have said, "but they leave us now when things are so much better."

This desire of the party to be in touch with popular sentiment explains at least in part the remarkable ascendancy of Polish sociology in recent years. Administrators want to avoid the mistakes of the Stalinist period, when the party moved in a closed and paranoid universe of fixed and unreal categories. So they sponsor social research, particularly opinion polls, in which large samples of the population are asked questions about such things as job satisfaction, the orientation of youth, attitudes toward vocational training, social mobility, and the social prestige of various occupations. Particularly where democratic mechanisms for gauging the will of the majority are unavailable, the public opinion poll may become an auxiliary of government: the interview responses become in some respects the functional equivalent of the ballot. And these studies—whether government-sponsored or not—are read carefully by policy makers. The manager of a huge new industrial enterprise in western Poland told a friend of mine, "We need social researchers here to find out what ails the workers. We don't want a new Adam Wazyk writing his *Poem for Adults.*" (Wazyk's bitter poem about the horrors of the new industrial complex of Nova Huta served as a kind of poetic manifesto for the October revolution.)

The lack of firm ideology for Polish Communism is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the party's educational policies. These contrast sharply with those of most totalitarian regimes. Only 20 per cent of all teachers today are members of the party. In 1957, the party had registered a gain of 200 new members from the teaching profession, but in 1959 no less than 9,000 left it. Young men and women who are now in their twenties rebelled violently against the indoctrination they were given in the schools of the Stalinist period. The generation of students which follows them has nothing to rebel against, since it has never been exposed to Marxist ideology in any consistent manner. There are three Polish youth organizations under the general direction of the

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party, but their total combined membership represents only one quarter of all Polish youth. Only 14 per cent of those of eligible age belong even to the organization equivalent to the Boy Scouts, the largest and least political of all the groups.

From 1956 until last year Catholic religious instruction was permitted in the schools, a major concession by the party to gain the support of the Church. At the same time "politics" had practically disappeared from the course of instruction. For a while it seemed that religion was to become the major "ideological" influence in Polish education. Last fall the regime finally abolished religious instruction in the schools: for one thing, the children of party members, under pressure from their peers, were finding it practically impossible not to attend the religious classes. However, by taking this instruction out of the schools, the government has made it possible for religious education to operate without state or party control of any kind, and in so doing may therefore have helped to make it all the more effective. Now the party has decided that the ideological level of the schools is "unsatisfactory"—and beginning this fall students in the last two years of high school will be devoting two hours each week to something called "philosophical studies." So far, however, there are neither textbooks nor specialized teachers for this subject. Eight hundred teachers are being given a special course of training, but some of them have already protested that the proposed plan of study contains too little non-Marxist philosophy. The children, they say, will not, for example, learn what existentialism really means. . . .

* * *

As for the population at large, to judge from my conversations with people and from some of the opinion polls, very few people have any desire to return to the pre-war social system—at least very few people in urban Poland. The majority of the population would in a general way consider themselves "socialist," but as in the West, this word no longer has an unambiguous meaning. In fact, the people I talked to who claimed to be for socialism defined it as "a system resembling that of Sweden," and those who were opposed to socialism defined it as a regime resembling that of the Soviet Union!

But even such vague ideological preferences as these play very little part in the everyday activities and ideas of the mass of the population. Since the short-lived exhilaration following on the events of October 1956, Polish life has suffered a massive withdrawal of affect from the public scene. No matter what the notion of the "end of ideology" does or does not signify in the West, in Poland this condition is an absolute reality—if for no other reason than that Poles feel themselves to be left no political choices. Given the proximity of Russia, there is indeed very little for them to do beyond what they have done already, and they would be hard put to find any genuine alternative to Gomulka's pragmatic balancing act. Hence the energies which might at other times have become absorbed in political affairs are now directed toward such things as art, theater, and music. Culturally speaking, Western Europe begins at the Russian-Polish border. Abstract painting is flourishing. At the theaters one gets to see a fair sample of the recent Western plays—Ionesco, Beckett, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams. Some of the best jazz on the other side of the Atlantic is played in Warsaw student hangouts and the clubs of the intelligentsia. (When the police recently raided the headquarters of a band of hooligans in a cave among the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto, they found an abstract mural on the walls.)

The young generation does not trust the party because it has come to be suspicious of *any* political appeals. It cultivates a kind of ostentatious nihilism. Only about 1 or 2 per cent of the students at Warsaw University express any interest in Marxism. When the authorities recently corralled students for a "spontaneous" demonstration in front of the American Embassy to protest against the Cuban invasion, those who could not think of a pretext not to come in the first place stole away after a few minutes. This youth is sullen and resentful, seeming to harbor some undirected feeling of frustration and betrayal.

And their elders, if they cannot share their style, nevertheless are quite as much withdrawn from public concern. But Poland is rapidly industrializing, and to this genera-

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tion the regime has in recent years brought many tangible benefits. Living standards have improved; a refrigerator or TV set is no longer an unattainable luxury. Housing is, of course, still the major problem: the most any single family is allowed is a two-room-plus-kitchen apartment, except for scientific workers who have the right to a three-room apartment (one room for study). Still, these overcrowded apartments are beginning to be filled with mass-produced amenities, and people have the sense that things are getting better all the time. For the country is rapidly reaching the point where it can get over the hump of economic development, where the painful process of primitive accumulation can give way to one of increasing consumption. Ideological and political differences with the West seem to pale into significance when they are seen against a background of the basic similarities of all emerging mass societies. Modern technological civilization puts the stamp of uniformity on societies whose structures may otherwise differ radically from one another. Certain areas of Warsaw look exactly like certain German towns in their *Wirtschaftswunder* prosperity.

* * *

IGNAZIO SILONE USED to say that in capitalist society the country was run by plutocrats, people whose power was based on their wealth, but that Fascist Italy was run by "cratopluts," that is, people whose wealth stemmed from their power. Whether or not the same is true for the other members of the Communist bloc, such is certainly not the case in Poland. Gomulka lives in a three-room apartment in a workers' district. Contrary to what general sociological theory would lead one to expect, there is a most imperfect correlation between social power and private income. The men who have great power have little money, even when supplemented by standard perquisites of status, like vacation homes for themselves and their families. Those with the highest incomes are private traders and businessmen (the *privat-initiativ*) and some free professionals like doctors and lawyers. What Bacon said about late 16th-century England applies equally well to contemporary Poland: "The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul." As in the days of Russia's NEP, the strata of society which the regime considers most inimical to its aims—namely, private urban enterprise, the free professions, and the peasantry—are precisely those enjoying the greatest economic benefit. But unlike the Russian policy makers who, fearing a revival of capitalism through capital accumulation by the peasantry, reverted to mass collectivization, the Gomulka regime harbors no such fears and envisages no such measures. The countryside is slowly being depleted by the mass exodus of the young to the city, and in any case, the specific weight of the peasantry is inevitably declining before the onslaught of industrialization. The regime, then, can rely on the working of sociological forces, without resort to terror, for maintaining the control of the economy.

* * *

IN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, when the old certitudes of the party no longer hold, everything comes to have a provisional character. Policy in the realm of ideas is as makeshift as it is in building construction or city planning. One day the censor might reject an article he would cheerfully pass on another; today a professor may lose a job in a research institute as a result of certain imprudent remarks, but tomorrow he might be offered another one. The censor does not allow the publication of translations of such bourgeois sociologists as Mannheim and Weber, though these works had already been announced; and studies thick with footnotes that refer to all the Western social thinkers and empirical researchers are published. Every social scientist I met has a full library in which places of honor are occupied by the works of Freud or Weber, Robert Merton or Talcott Parsons. As I have said, the censor can at times be very severe, yet he recently passed an article in which there appeared a sardonic reference to "the owners of the people's Poland." (My own suggestion that the Russian class structure was best discussed by distinguishing between the upper-classless, the middle-classless, and the lower-classless was received into the body of comment currently circulating through the cafés and private parties of the social scientists.)

The revisionist intellectuals who played a leading part in October 1956 still meet

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every second week in their clubhouse "The Crooked Circle" in the Old City. Anywhere from fifty to five hundred people, depending on the topic of discussion, attend these meetings. The regime tolerates them possibly on the ground that they constitute a kind of safety valve. The discussions nevertheless *do* have real reverberations since many of the Crooked Circle members are people in positions of high responsibility and influence. A de-ideologized party finally has no real means of shielding itself from such influences. And while the intellectual situation may look and be an unstable one, the present balance has persisted through the last five years.

The majority of the intelligentsia, however, is not much interested in the meetings at the Crooked Circle. To them the 1956 revisionists are relics of another, perhaps heroic, age whom one may admire and leave alone. People have been able to avail themselves of job opportunities in administration, research institutes, and the like, which are freely open to talent. In fact, most intellectuals hold several jobs simultaneously, and under these conditions are quickly depoliticized. They have to make a certain concession to the powers that be, and find that they can ease any possible qualms of conscience by setting very high standards of technical achievement for themselves. A job well done within their sphere of responsibility comes to seem far more valuable than pronouncements on political issues.

Intellectually, the Polish intelligentsia has one great advantage over its colleagues in Western Europe. The vague "progressivist" clichés that still clutter so many first-rate brains in the West have for them been utterly destroyed. A Polish intellectual feels a mixture of irony and pity when he reads, say, that Sartre is toying with the myth of the proletariat or that he identifies the French Communist party with "true" working-class interests. There is no Warsaw counterpart to the opium of the left-wing intellectuals of Western Europe.

Catholic intellectuals in Poland, to judge by their publications—I did not meet any—are extremely vigorous. And, I am told, it is among them that one is most likely to find dedicated scholars. The graduates of the Catholic University in Lublin with rare exception do not get jobs in public schools, universities, or administration; around this university one apparently finds the young men who resemble those modern "clerks," disinterested servants of the cause of ideas, whom Julien Benda wrote about. The younger Catholic intellectuals are influenced by French Christian-Socialism and Personalism; and this sometimes brings them into conflict with the more conservative members of the Church hierarchy. It is not uncommon for young Catholics and young former Marxists to meet and discover that they, as marginal men from the two great antagonistic camps of Polish society, have more in common among themselves than they have with the huge bureaucratic organizations from which they stem.

* * *

POLAND, THEN, PRESENTS the spectacle of a planned society being put together from day to day in a most unplanned way. The rebuilding of Warsaw is a case in point. Apartment houses, for instance, are constructed in the central "downtown" areas of the city with utter disregard for the economics of land utilization. The inefficiency and disorder in this city border on the miraculous. My hotel room in the newest and most up-to-date hotel of the city had a splendid bathroom, but hot water was available only three days out of the eight I spent there—and since there was no stopper for either the sink or the bathtub, I had to stuff a towel into the drain.

It seems that a group of architects proposed to the City Council to build a number of thirty-story apartment houses around the Palace of Culture so as to hide it somewhat and prevent it from monopolizing the skyline. The Council was perfectly willing to consider the project on the condition that the architects themselves agreed to move into the top-floor apartments. This the architects indignantly declined to do, and the project was abandoned. They were aware of the hazard of living thirty floors up in a country where the elevators work only sporadically and hot water is not likely to reach that high with any regularity.

* * *

THE POLISH WORKERS' party headquarters, built in the most unappealing Russian style,

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stands in the middle of the city, but it is not from here, one feels, that the transforming energy of recent years has come. What the party has done is to make possible that uneasy *modus vivendi* with Russia which was a necessary condition for further development. But the real impetus has come from the enormous technological and industrial process itself. Beside this powerful long-term process all the short-term influences seem minor and transitory. There were some 88,000 engineers in Poland in 1960; by 1965 it is predicted that there will be 116,000, and that during the same period, the number of technicians will rise from 161,000 to 272,000. The share of net investment in the total national income will rise from the already extremely high figure of 20.1 per cent in 1960 to 22.2 per cent in 1965, and the plan is for per capita consumption to rise in these five years by 23 per cent.

The service in stores and restaurants is appalling, the amount of paper work involved in even the simplest transaction is staggering—people often show an almost nihilistic disregard of their work—yet somehow life proceeds and things get done. Rows of new houses go up every month, and the standards of consumption continue to increase. Both hooliganism and alcoholism have declined with the coming of consumer goods onto the market. The availability of such goods is in itself a major incentive to produce. The unskilled worker who used to drink away a high proportion of his earnings out of sheer boredom, and because there was little else he could buy with his extra income, now saves for a television set. There is less delinquency now, not only because of the gradual elimination of the ruined buildings in which the hooligans used to hide, but also because young workers can now acquire legitimately some of the marks of status and identity.

Poland today is a country caught in the fascinating contradictions of a de-ideologized Communism. Given any small amount of political and military stability in the coming decades, the country promises to become a full-fledged member of the mass technological family, sharing its concerns and bearing a resemblance that is stronger and seems to go far deeper than matters of political structure.

LEWIS A. COSER, *who frequently writes for* COMMENTARY, *was recently in Europe on a Fulbright grant. He teaches sociology at Brandeis University, and is the author of* The Functions of Social Conflict *and (with Irving Howe)* The American Communist Party.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Scientists, Poets, Students

To the Editor of Commentary:

Although I was entertained by Edgar Z. Friedenberg's report in the August issue ["Why Students Leave Science"], I believe any serious reader will object to his drawing either explicit or implicit conclusions based upon the "study" as performed. It is not necessary to cite his lumping together of "science" and engineering, the size of the sample, or the method of the study itself (e.g., the card sorting), each of which is debatable on one ground or another; for Mr. Friedenberg is undoubtedly aware of their possible pitfalls. The choice of the "control group" is another matter.

From the results presented—and based upon my own (informal) observation—I believe that the differences seemingly detected between the groups are primarily due to the differences between (good) students who *change* their major subject after some exposure to it and those who do not. The exclusion of students who had made major changes other than "from science" invalidates conclusions about how "the poets and philosophers have packed up, packed it in, and left" science. It seems evident that students who had both the dissatisfaction and courage to make a major change in career plans in college would tend to be to the "left" of those who did not.

Perhaps Mr. Friedenberg will give us a report on students who have left other fields and *entered* science. Some do, you know, in spite of the greater academic penalties.

G. M. Weinberg

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

Permit me, as an electrical engineer, to take issue with the conclusions reached by Edgar Z. Friedenberg.

Erroneously, and perhaps fatally, the author has discussed engineers and scientists as if those titles as well as the people who fill them were interchangeable. . . . Nothing could be further from the truth than the assumption that the motivations and goals of engineers and scientists are the same or ought to be the same.

The error into which this unwarranted assumption has led the author is clearly demonstrated by the case of Mr. Byron, engineer at Stanford. The author believes that Mr. Bryon is an "original" mind apparently because he remains in "science" but has the card choices of non-scientists. . . . The fact is that many engineers do not consider themselves scientists and Byron's response is typical of this group and quite unoriginal.

Another conclusion reached by Mr. Friedenberg is that students leaving engineering do so for their "feelings" or the lack of a liberal education, rather than for their economic or social aspirations. In support of this, he cites Mr. Perry, a former engineering student who switched to, of all things, business management. . . . "Perry: . . . we had . . . the idea that . . . the engineer was the person who was *going to be successful* which I fully believe now is entirely a fallacy." To my mind, Perry is saying that in wanting to be a success, he was misled into believing that engineering was the occupation in which this was best accomplished. . . .

Near the end of his article, the author states that "the poets and philosophers have packed up and left" engineering and science. This seems to imply that in the good old days, the ranks of the technically trained were overflowing with the likes of Francis Bacon, Blaise Pascal, and René Descartes. . . . The engineering profession is only 150 years old. The antecedents of engineers were surveyors, boatwrights, clock makers, and pulley, winch, and water wheel designers. . . . Today, the student who chooses engineering is still of the same breed; basically a tinker whose greatest joy is in designing something that moves, lights, sparks, floats, flies, heats, or makes noise, or just sits quietly and is *useful* to someone, anyone. Any student whose desire is to sit and think about the nature of the physical world, or the social implications of technology, the ethics of Spinoza, or the poems of Dylan Thomas, ought not to be in engineering; and from the statistics presented, is not, or is leaving. . . .

Roy G. Saltman

Flushing, New York

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To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . I am one of those who "left" science. Although I graduated from Hunter College as a science major, I am, at present, teaching English.

Why? I think the answer was succinctly stated by Mr. Byron. "Who is the man on the street? You just don't go fiddling around with the man on the street if you're a scientist."

Aye, there's the rub! Science regards itself as the master—not the servant—of man. And there are many of us who resent this fact, feeling that we are creating a Frankenstein's monster that might some day destroy us all.

Clara Wishner

Helmuth, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

"Why Students Leave Science" is an interesting academic and a significant social question, but a careful reading of Edgar Z. Friedenberg's article suggests that he has not done justice to either aspect of this problem. . . .

The sample used appears to be grossly inadequate both technically and conceptually. Students from three colleges—Brooklyn, Ohio State, and Stanford—were interviewed. Why these particular schools? Were they selected for methodological reasons, for administrative ones, or simply arbitrarily? . . . But these are minor points compared to interviewing only those who, in effect, volunteered to be interviewed. Mr. Friedenberg does mention that his volunteer sample is not representative of science students in American colleges. . . . His sample is not even representative of science students in the three colleges which he used. Even more, previous research has shown that volunteer samples such as the one reported on by Mr. Friedenberg tend to be composed of deviant individuals. . . . Were Mr. Friedenberg reporting to his colleagues, a description of his sample as unrepresentative and volunteer would suffice to indicate the less than limited value of his findings. . . . By the conclusion of the article, it is apparent that Mr. Friedenberg believes that his study has shown that the most desirable students are leaving the sciences and why. . . .

His sample is described as comprising engineers and other natural scientists. The number of individuals from each discipline is, unfortunately, not given, although engineers apparently (from the number of references to them in the article) form the largest single group. . . . There are many and important differences even between physicists, chemists, and biologists, and certainly between these groups and engineers, in terms of training, values, interests, ideologies, and personalities. . . .

The data which Mr. Friedenberg presents . . . also suffer from certain inadequacies. . . . For example, he does not compare the grades of those who left the sciences with the grades of those who remained. He appears to have made no effort to compare the efforts which the two groups had to exert in order to maintain passing grades.

Finally, the intellectual background of the students in his sample is left unmentioned. High schools being what they are, many bright students may not have realized the extent of career opportunities available to them until they entered college. . . .

But how useful are the data which Mr. Friedenberg did collect? . . . My first reaction, upon reading the cards described in the text, and upon savoring the full flavor of Mr. Friedenberg's values, was that he selected statements reflecting his values. Card #26 is an excellent example. . . . In addition, the utility of the cards is not only limited by the circumscribed area which they appear to cover, but, at least in question #25, by a remarkable ambiguity of phrasing. A sensitive, imaginative, and creative physicist would disagree with that card because of the statement "the scientific method, as it is taught in the classroom and thought of by the general run of scientists, actually hampers efforts to understand many problems," while an equally sensitive, imaginative, and creative artist would, justifiably, agree with it because of the statement that "insight into the way things develop, and their unique, particular meaning, are sacrificed to rigid experimental control.". . .

Mr. Friedenberg concludes that "the subjects who leave science and engineering, then, insist that their feelings are the source of their integrity; and consider them more important than their economic and social aspirations." Granted that those who left science consider it relatively unimportant to advise prospective science candidates about the limited financial rewards of the field and about the public stereotype of scientists, but important to warn them about the "rigidity" of the scientific method, still, how does this lead to Mr. Friedenberg's interpretation? . . .

If the article leaves one still ignorant of the reasons why students leave science, it

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does provide one with a good deal of knowledge about Mr. Friedenberg.

STANLEY BUDNER
New York State Psychiatric Institute
New York City

MR. FRIEDENBERG *writes*:

Several readers criticize our inclusion of *both* engineers and scientists in a study of science students. [The research on which Mr. Friedenberg's article was based was conducted in collaboration with Carl Nordstrom–ED.] The original card-statements are phrased in terms of scientists only because at Brooklyn College, where we tried our instrument out in a pilot run, there are no engineering students as such. We had to use the same card texts later at Ohio State and Stanford if we wanted to compare all our students together—giving institutional differences a chance to manifest themselves rather than assuming them—and one of the things we most wanted to find out was whether we got pure clusters of engineers or scientists exclusively, as we would have done had they tended consistently to select different cards. This involved us, to be sure, in assuming that engineers regard themselves as a kind of scientist, otherwise they simply could not have followed the directions given them for the card-sort. But our subjects were perfectly aware of the special characteristics that distinguish engineering from other scientific pursuits, and many discussed these differences in their interviews.

Mr. Weinberg's hunch that we might have found students who change *into* science very much like those who change *out* of it—in having the courage and self-awareness to make a break—seems to me very important, and he is certainly correct in pointing out that this group should be studied. However, such individuals ought to have shown up among our "controls" if they are among the best of those going on in science. They didn't, but he is right in noting that we did not deal systematically with this issue.

Mr. Saltman, I think, underestimates the amount of scholarly originality that engineering now demands of its most qualified people. In a world as technological as ours, engineering is neither narrower nor shallower than the specialized aspects of pure science. It is structurally different because its organization derives more from the job it has to do and less from internal regularity. But a good engineer today had better be more than a tinker, and give more than a tinker's damn.

Some of the questions Mr. Budner raises are answered in the formal report of the study that Nordstrom and I made to the Office of Education. Contrary to his inference, there were five more scientists than engineers in the total sample, though there were more engineers among those who had changed. There were 34 science students and 41 engineering students in our "experimental" group, and 29 science and 17 engineering in the "control." The mean gradepoint average of the experimentals, on the usual four-point scale, was 2.78; of the controls, 3.49. As the COMMENTARY article states, we tried to get excellent students for our control group because we wanted them as models for comparison. For our experimentals, we wanted only to be sure that they had been doing well and that their change was voluntary. We considered matching the two groups for gradepoint and decided that if we did, we would eliminate at the outset some of the very people we ought to be studying—since capable students who are beginning to lose interest in a field sometimes first realize this themselves when their grades begin to drop. One factor in this connection that I wish we *had* been able to study was whether a difference between our "experimentals" and "controls" corresponds in any way to the difference that Getzels and Jackson have been finding between students with high (Guilford and other) scores on creativity and relatively low (though still superior) conventional IQ scores, and those in whom these qualities are reversed. The interview materials suggest we may have been dealing with just this difference.

The rest of Mr. Budner's comments seem to me to show less understanding of our procedure than might perhaps have been expected of so interested a reader. The purpose of a Q-sort procedure is precisely to permit subjects to express the "many and important differences between physicists, chemists . . . in terms of values, interests, ideologies, and personalities" to which he refers. His statement: "My first reaction, upon reading the cards described in the text, and upon savoring the full flavor of Mr. Friedenberg's values, was that he selected statements reflecting his values," is either nonsense, or an accusation of fraud, or both. The cards quoted, as the article plainly states, are those of the 32 that distinguished among clusters of subjects, or between experimentals and controls. All the card statements are, of course, critical of science—that is inherent in the procedure—but wherever it

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was logically possible criticisms from opposing points of view were included among the 32 statements. Moreover, as the article states, each of our subjects was asked to comment on any bases of criticism he felt were important that the cards had not covered. The card-texts, too, are all included in the formal report of the study.

Mr. Budner is correct, however, in inferring that all the students who participated in our study were volunteers. Professor Nordstrom and I have no powers of subpoena. They would not be consistent with our values.

Canada's Jewish Community

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have been vitally interested in the career of Mordecai Richler ["Their Canada and Mine," August] for the past few years, but have often felt varying measures of discontent with his work. . . . I lived, as he did, within the Montreal ghetto. . . . I attended the same schools as he did; if his memories focus largely in Room 41 of Baron Byng High School, mine manifest themselves primarily in Room 42. I too left Canada, but was away for a much longer period than Mr. Richler—thirteen years to be precise, and returned to find most everything greatly altered. Likewise, I have a novel published that dwells on life within the Montreal ghetto, beyond it, and the relative social and political upheavals between 1939–1956 [*Falls the Shadow*].

Here the fundamental disparities originate: upon *my* return to Canada, when *my* uncle asked me about Israel, I was able to tell him just about everything, having been happily involved in its creation. About the Folies Bergères, I am sad to say, I could report very little, nor, unfortunately, about the Old Vic and the BBC. . . . Yet, don't label me chauvinist: why is a Canadian from Israel necessarily more chauvinist, say, than a Canadian from England? . . .

In his essay for COMMENTARY Mordecai Richler has finally brought under control the sensationalism that characterized his earlier articles in *Maclean's* [a Canadian magazine], and to an extent, his central theme in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*. . . .

What disturbs me?

Mr. Richler doesn't really like us. Us, that is, the Jewish community, that bred him. In *Duddy Kravitz* and the *Maclean's* articles he portrays us as the penny-pinching, money-grubbing, jokers, pranksters, and status seekers that we are, but fails to qualify that only some of us fall into these categories. . . . He implies that these ills are specifically Jewish ones, whereas in reality they are the derivatives of the drift of society as a whole. . . . In the *Duddy Kravitz* novel there are two completely honest characters, and they "happen to be" the two Gentiles. . . .

As for "Americanism"—this is certainly not a unique Jewish inclination; nor an exclusive Canadian trend. . . . Why single out the Canadian Jews?

Concerning irrelevant specifics:

(1) The golf story I heard was different—"Yes, a Gentile applied and was accepted; he must be *meshuge.*"

(2) We were never so forward and brave with the French boys; they employed the tactics Richler attributes to the Jewish boys against us; we did our best to steer clear of them.

(3) Richler's repetitious use of the term "pea-soup" is jarring; to me this type of word is synonymous with "kike."

To sum up. I have dug into Richler's work trying to discover what he stands for. I do not know. Until proven otherwise, I must consider him (a fault in our time) "ismless."

NAHUM RAVEL

Sasa, Israel

Competing with Russia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Wayland and Elizabeth Young in their article on disarmament ["Disarmament vs. Arms Control," August] state: "Only those who despair of the West's ability to compete constructively with Communism can still put their trust in the arms race." No mention is made of Soviet despair of its ability to compete constructively with the West. It is precisely here where the danger lies. They can only compete destructively. The fact is that the Soviet Union has surpassed us in the thrust of their rockets and the size of their army—nowhere else. . . . It is the falseness of the [Youngs'] first assumption that makes a good deal of the article irrelevant.

ARTHUR J. LEVENSON

Silver Spring, Maryland

WAYLAND AND ELIZABETH YOUNG *write:*

We are surprised Mr. Levenson has these doubts about Soviet belief in their own economic competitiveness. The likelihood is that their standard of living will reach

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America's present level in the mid-70's and actually catch up with the United States in about 1980. Mr. Levenson might also refer to "Comparisons of United States and Soviet Economics" (Sub-Committee of Economic Statistics of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, 1959) which deals with Russian economic competition. But apart from how much confidence the Soviet Union displays in its system, we in the West are not responsible for that system. We are responsible for our own system and for seeing that it is one in which we can have confidence. Lenin certainly believed that war and armaments were necessary to keep capitalism going, but need we believe it?

The American Jewish League Against Communism

To the Editor of Commentary:

In Alan F. Westin's article, "The John Birch Society," in your August issue, it is stated: "[Welch] indicates that it [the John Birch Society] has been endorsed by the American Jewish League Against Communism (a Jewish right-fundamentalist group)."

The American Jewish League Against Communism (of which I am Chairman of the Board, having previously been President) has never endorsed any organization. From its beginning, the League has held to the principle of going it alone and has had no affiliations and given no endorsements. Individual members do as they choose.

I do not know what Mr. Westin means by "right-fundamentalism." It is a contrived term that conveys no particular meaning. The American Jewish League Against Communism is opposed to Marxist-Leninist Communism in this country and views with distrust other countries which adopt this sociological and economic doctrine.

Does not Mr. Westin take the same position?

George E. Sokolsky

Otis, Massachusetts

Toynbee, Pro and Con

To the Editor of Commentary:

Rabbi Jacob B. Agus has placed us in his debt by his discussion on "Toynbee's Epistle to the Jews" [September]. He demonstrates what all perspicacious readers have realized right along, that the new Toynbee does not differ from the old except in vocabulary. However, Rabbi Agus's summation of Toynbee's position needs a slight emendation. Agus writes: Toynbee "now thinks of the Jewish religion stripped of non-essentials as the hope of the world, while he is convinced that Jewish nationalism is almost certain to cause a resurgence of anti-Semitism." Toynbee's view would be better summarized as follows: "He now thinks of the Jewish religion stripped of all its Jewish characteristics as the hope of the world, etc."

So much for Dr. Toynbee's prescription for the Jewish people. If the patient follows the doctor's advice, a glorious destiny awaits it—it will assimilate and disappear like the ancient Romans, leaving a trail of glory behind. If the patient proves recalcitrant and refuses to take the doctor's medicine, an inglorious fate awaits him—he will be annihilated by a recrudescence of anti-Semitism. As a religious believer, Toynbee holds fast to the doctrine of free will, and gives the Jewish people a fair choice: "Heads I win, tails you lose." But it serves them right, since Zionism, as every inhabitant of Dr. Toynbee's never-never-land knows, is responsible for the emergence of Nazism and can scarcely be told apart from it.

Oh for a few good old-fashioned enemies with whom we could hope to cope! It is clear that our friends and their apologists are too much for us.

(Dr.) Robert Gordis

Temple Beth-El
Long Island, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

Why has Rabbi Agus become the one *Melitz Yosher*—pleader—for a man who has openly declared the Jewish people to be nothing more than a fossilized group with vestigial remnants of ancient Syria? Is Rabbi Agus so naive as to think that Professor Toynbee has changed his mind because he seems to have "reconsidered" his first allegations in his new "reconsiderations"? . . .

Dr. Toynbee reminds me, I am afraid, of a very fine woman in our community who spoke rather unkindly about another. Then suddenly I was surprised to hear her reverse her approach and speak very favorably. I was convinced that when she saw that nothing had happened after speaking evil of the person, she came to believe that if she failed to use the expression *"Kein ayin hora"* ("may no evil eye attack her") after speaking well of the woman, evil would befall her. Toynbee, I am afraid, is using the same tactics. He saw he got nowhere with his first attack; he now resorts to the second method of telling the world what a wonderful people the Jews are and that they have the solution

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to the world's problems through Judaism. . . .

Judaism holds no such dreams, and Rabbi Agus should let dead dogs sleep. His defense of this arch enemy of the Jews—Toynbee compares the Jews to the Hitlerites when he sees the "poor" Arabs being left out in the rain by the establishment of the State of Israel—is in poor taste. Toynbee is no "babe in the woods."

(Rabbi) Abraham E. Halpern
Congregation B'nai Amoona
St. Louis, Missouri

To the Editor of Commentary:

Rabbi Agus's article . . . undoubtedly will aid in exonerating Dr. Toynbee from charges of anti-Semitism; indeed it would be intellectually untenable to sustain such charges in view of Dr. Toynbee's lecture to the British section of the Jewish Congress.

But what else does his new book contribute to . . . Jews perplexed by their persent-day dilemma which the existence of the State of Israel has called forth? Dr. Toynbee's charge that nationalism is one of the major causes of the rise of anti-Semitism may aid him in the pattern he imposes upon history, but the question remains whether this theory . . . is adequate. . . .

Ever since the dispersion, anti-Semitism has been an aspect of Western civilization. The medieval Jew suffered as did the Jew in the modern nation-state. . . . The fanatic Crusader killing Jews whom local Church authorities often tried to protect, the French bourgeoisie ranting against *le juif Dreyfus*, and the holocaust in Germany point to more universal and more general causes, and to name nationalism as the cause seems oversimplification. . . .

Arthur Dermer
Brookline, Massachusetts

Rabbi Agus *writes:*

Dr. Gordis's letter illustrates a rabbinic adage—"his very acuteness leads him to error." While Toynbee condemns Zionism in the most bitter terms, even referring to Zionists as "disciples of the Nazis," he does not ever state that Zionism was "responsible for the emergence of Nazism." At the time when "our good old-fashioned enemies" brought about the annihilation of six million Jews, it is hard to see why we should strive by subtle "emendation" or crude distortion to add the worldwide renown of a great savant to the armory of our foes.

Friends may be wrong. "Whisper it not in Gath"—even we rabbis can be wrong. Toynbee's concept of the Jewish "mission" does not differ from that of the great Reform masters—Geiger, Montefiore, Einhorn, and Kohler.

I happen to concur in Dr. Gordis's judgment about the indispensability of Jewish ritual and "communal identity." My dissent is expounded at length in the essay which is printed as XV Annex in Toynbee's last volume, *Reconsiderations.*

As to nationalism, Toynbee regards it as the pseudo-faith of many moderns. Few will doubt that, in the 20th century, anti-Semitism derives from the racial myths and ethnic idolatries of Gentile nations. Since by the law of Newton, every action evokes an equal and opposite reaction, a renascent, worldwide Jewish nationalism might lead to a resurgence of Gentile racism. Toynbee rejects the notion that anti-Semitism is the inevitable and inescapable lot of Jews in the Diaspora.

In answer to Rabbi Halpern's question, I agree that I served as a *Melitz Yosher,* but in the original Hebraic sense of the term—i.e., as "a just interpreter." I sought to interpret Judaism and Jewish history to Toynbee and Toynbee to the Jews. A breakdown in meaningful dialogue on the highest levels of scholarship leads to melancholy consequences on the lowest levels of popular mythology. So Fichte and Treitschke led to Wagner, Chamberlain, and Rosenberg. Furthermore, our own people are more likely to read Toynbee than the works of Jewish historians.

As to the folklore and myth in his letter—it is delicious. And it speaks for itself.

The Policies of a Nuclear Age

To the Editor of Commentary:

I would expect despair from a neighbor who is trapped by the neuroses of old age and sits all day on his porch, talking to himself about uncertainty and the atom bomb. I expect despair from a man who calmly told a friend that the moral responsibility of a parent is to smother his children in the event of a nuclear war, rather than permit them to die of radiation sickness. I expect despair from another man who is accumulating an arms cache so that he and his rural neighbors may shoot down refugees from contaminated urban areas. But I did not expect despair from Hans J. Morgenthau ["Death in the Nuclear Age," September].

The minimum "radical transformation of thought and action" that Morgenthau be-

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lieves to be necessary may have to begin from a withdrawal of consent to policies that can destroy civilization and history. After that, we can discuss alternate policies and alternate means of defense. But the prospect of meaningless life and death will remain with us so long as conscientious men acquiesce in policies based on a readiness to inflict mass murder in the name of freedom.

It is tragically useless to bemoan the nuclear malaise without considering the policies of national violence which produce it.

ARTHUR SPRINGER

Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I want to express my appreciation of Hans J. Morgenthau's very fine article.

I hope that this statement gets widely reprinted. . . .

THOMAS H. ELIOT
Dean

Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This afternoon I read two of Mr. Morgenthau's articles. The one which appears in the September COMMENTARY and a *Yale Review* article from 1957 in which he said: "When this historic moment comes [when nations have lost even the preventive capacity of psychological deterrence]—as it surely must if the present trend is not reversed—the nation-state will connote not life and civilization, but anarchy and universal destruction."

After reading "Death in the Nuclear Age" I am moved to ask whether he thinks that moment has come. Since he is a more knowledgeable and experienced observer of the political scene than I can ever hope to be, I would greatly appreciate knowing his estimate of where we presently stand in the historic timetable that has apparently cancelled all future engagements for the political entity known as the nation-state. . . .

JOHN MARTINSON

Berkeley, California

Israeli Jews, American Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After a short visit to Israel where "normalization" was everywhere noticeable but resurgent personal idealism harder to detect, I am encouraged by Mati Meged's article ["The Normalization of Israel"] in the September issue. . . . But even if a private rather than a purely public sense of responsibility burgeoned again, would this be an adequate acknowledgment by the Israeli of his "Jewish fate"? I think not.

The Israeli identifies fully with Jews of varied backgrounds, practicing sometimes exotic customs—providing such Jews live, work, and fight in Israel. Moshe Dayan voiced this attitude in a recent television program when he wondered why young American Jews didn't come to Israel to share in the burdens of building up the land and defending it. After all, he argued, are they not Jews? This, to my mind, is remote from the idea of Jewish peoplehood which has sustained Judaism throughout its tortuous history. . . .

In this respect, it seems to me, American Jews are over-committed to the fate of Jewry particularly as it exists in Israel which is thought to be its center. . . . They have been told so many times that a full Jewish life can only be lived in Eretz Yisroel that they are besieged by guilt when they find it difficult to uproot themselves. . . .

Only when the American Jew and the Israeli Jew each plants his feet firmly in the soil of his own land, looks out across the sea, and says, "Here I am," will each recognize that he is the other's brother.

GEORGE DARGO

Brooklyn, New York

"Mila 18" and Objectivity

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Your choice of Midge Decter to review *Mila 18* ["Popular Jews," October] is bewildering. How objective can a reviewer be about the author of *Mila 18* if she "adamantly refused to read *Exodus* for two years"?

Midge Decter refers to Uris's work as "pornographic" and "hard-core trash," and yet she confesses to sitting through the night to finish his novel in one reading. Why is "confession" necessary?

The reviewer seems more concerned with analyzing the author's motivation in choosing a Jewish theme than in reviewing the contents and style of the book itself.

After reading the critique of *Mila 18* and recalling your recent symposium of young intellectuals, I question whether our Jewish critics can objectively review novels of Jewish content by Jewish authors.

IRVING BERNSTEIN

Beverly Hills, California

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THE EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF JAMES B. CONANT*

Martin Mayer

JAMES BRYANT CONANT, formerly president of Harvard, has been speaking and writing about public schools for nearly two decades. Since his return from Germany, where he was Eisenhower's High Commissioner and then Ambassador to Bonn, he has been engaged, with the help of a staff paid by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, in an extended study of American public secondary education. This study has produced four short books of rather dry, dehumanized comment and prescription. *Slums and Suburbs* is in this respect several cuts above its predecessors. Like the others, it is bloodless and condescending, terribly concerned about society, school administrators, and guidance counselors rather than about the education of children. But it does approach reality: Dr. Conant is genuinely shocked by the conditions of life in the slums, and genuinely irritated by the complacency of suburbanites. Where *The American High School Today* speaks of "our devotion to the ideals of equality of opportunity," *Slums and Suburbs* finds "challenges to our American belief in the principle of equality of opportunity."

Unfortunately, once he has recognized these "challenges"—the disparity between slums and surburbs in skin color, IQ score, home atmosphere, reading ability, chance of higher education, expenditure on schools, etc.—Dr. Conant rapidly backs away. The community, he argues, governs what can be done in the schools; and the Negro slum is a bad community. IQ tests and teacher grades may be class- and caste-biased against the Negro slum child, but they are, after all, "reliable predictors of academic success." From such information (and much else), most observers would draw the conclusion that our ideas of "academic success" are class-biased, too—but Dr. Conant will have no truck with the subversion of American institutions.

As a result, *Slums and Suburbs* finally pulls all the way back to a Booker T. Washington theory of Negro education. "The educational experiences of youth," Dr. Conant writes (in italics, too), "should fit their subsequent employment." Most Negroes, it seems, are going to fill slightly skilled or unskilled jobs; thus we need occupational programs and vocational schools to take care of them. It is particularly preposterous that "there are schools where Negroes who have difficulty reading English are taking Latin"—a school without Latin will be superior to one with Latin, Dr. Conant argues, "if it has what it should have in the way of remedial reading teachers, guidance personnel, and perhaps social workers." Latin, of course, is easy to eliminate. But what about algebra or physics, lack of which will destroy any hope of a career as a technician; what about French, which might enable an American Negro to work in Central Africa? In the context of Dr. Conant's argument—he never criticizes the many Negro district high schools which offer no serious mathematics or science, no modern foreign languages—these subjects are as dispensable as Latin. They are only for "the talented," that fraction of the population—a very tiny fraction in the Negro slums—which can score well on class-biased aptitude tests.

Low expectations lead Dr. Conant to a horrifying failure of perception in his descriptions of Negro slum junior high schools. "One finds the boys wearing ties and jackets," he writes. "When spoken to in the classroom, they rise to recite. Passing time

A review of *Slums and Suburbs*, by James Bryant Conant (McGraw-Hill, 147 pp., $3.95; paper, $1.95).

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between classes may be as short as one minute in order to preserve order in the halls. The school attempts to bring some kind of order to otherwise chaotic lives." The description is accurate, but this "tight discipline," which Dr. Conant so admires, is the saddest aspect of a mournful place. There is, after all, a difference between a school and a jail; at the least, Dr. Conant should have noticed that this prison atmosphere fades away in those slum schools where an upgrading project—like New York's Higher Horizons—has actually taken root and begun to grow of its own vitality.

Dr. Conant has always viewed society as a wholly static affair, in which nothing ever changes except the statistics; the individual exists only as job-holder and vote-caster. To him the statement that "the community largely determines what goes on in the school" is identical with the statement that "educational experiences . . . should fit subsequent employment." In Dr. Conant's philosophy, despite many leanings-over-backward, the school merely intervenes between childhood and adult occupation, which is already contained in pre-school inheritance and environment. It cannot open a new world, encourage new hopes, create new skills for use off the job as well as on. But equality of opportunity, if it means anything at all (an arguable proposition), means that beginnings shall *not* determine endings, that the school shall adapt itself to the child's environment for the purpose of leaving his future open to opportunities.

Of the three great interacting abstractions in education—aptitude, motivation, and technique—Dr. Conant sees only the first two. He can deal with an idea like programmed instruction ("teaching machines"), which assumes that improvements in technique can increase "aptitude" and create "motivation," only by a joke about one student getting one A while another gets two A's in the same length of time. He is impressed by his observation that the same methods for teaching reading produce good results in suburbs and bad results in slums; it does not occur to him that our methods may be so inefficient that only children whose drive to read is quite high can overcome their teachers' failures of technique—or even that it might be a good idea to try different methods in the different environments.

Basically, then, Dr. Conant sees no hope for large improvements—and where he finds them, he refuses to believe them. Samuel Shepard's success in the Negro slums of St. Louis, for example, is merely "claimed"; it does no more than raise "the very interesting question of the extent to which motivation can overcome the lack of developed ability as tested by scholastic aptitude tests"; one doubts that "this dynamism can be maintained with the novelty gone." Dr. Conant's time sense runs backward only, never forward. He stresses the need to educate the parents of today's slum schoolchildren, but he fails to see the influence Dr. Shepard's current efforts may have when we come to educate the children of the children now in St. Louis schools.

THIS FAILURE of time sense may also account for Dr. Conant's widely criticized recommendation that the Northern Negroes stay in their Negro schools and stop agitating for the right of transfer to schools in white districts. If the pattern of segregation is to be broken, surely childhood is the easiest time to break it. Children's attitudes toward members of other races probably do not change much as the result of school experiences, but their *fear* of other races can be largely eliminated. Desegregation of the schools is over the long run the most likely way to eliminate that discrimination in employment possibilities which rightly distresses Dr. Conant.

Oddly enough, the logic of Dr. Conant's argument should force him to an integrationist position. If the Negro slum is a bad community, and the community controls what can be done in the schools, then surely society is obliged to shift Negro children to schools controlled by better communities. By Dr. Conant's own reckoning, efforts to improve segregated slum schools can come to nothing, because the controlling community is unchanged—and, indeed, Dr. Conant has no specific suggestions other than the expenditure of money.

Actually, the school is not powerless before the local community. Our experience with the children of immigrants at the turn of the century demonstrates that the school can upgrade, step by step, the quality of

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education offered to slum children. There is a strong case to be made for the proposition that such upgrading, something similar to Dr. Shepard's work in St. Louis, should be required before Negro children are thrown into the academically more difficult world of the middle-class white school. Some of the "new Negro" leaders, who are so eager to bus children around town to school, seem more concerned with the presence of the child than with his education; for all their apparent aggressiveness, they are essentially softer than the NAACP leaders who demanded from the State of Virginia their children's right to fail. But eventually the schools must be mixed; segregated facilities *are* inherently unequal. There is no merit whatever in Dr. Conant's Jesuitical proposition that segregated schools can be equal in the North because the segregation is created by neighborhoods rather than by law. The cat comes out of the bag with a whoosh when Dr. Conant praises an unnamed school superintendent for saying that schools "should not become involved in attempts to correct the consequences of voluntary segregated housing." Why not? Dr. Conant is willing to give the schools responsibility for the job placement of former students to the age of twenty-one, a far more difficult problem. Anyway, who but a school superintendent and Dr. Conant ever believed that segregated housing is "voluntary"?

However profoundly one disagrees with the slum section of Dr. Conant's book, one must respect the concern that made him wish to write it. The suburbs section, unfortunately, is far less interesting. Here Dr. Conant returns to the irrelevancies of the earlier reports—measurements of the quality of education by numbers of "courses," praise for the day broken into seven or eight rather than six "periods," as though there were something inevitable about the course that meets every day for the same length of time, or something desirable about bells and milling in halls. We are back in the realm of sloppily used technical language (the distribution of intelligence-test scores in suburban schools is skewed to the left, not, as Dr. Conant has it, to the right—"skewed" has a distinct meaning in statistics); of numbers given without their frame of reference (Newton's average IQ is 110, Scarsdale's is 126—but Dr. Conant does not mention that different tests, with different standard deviations, were employed to garner these figures); of inaccurate international comparisons (Dr. Conant "cannot envision" an American selective high school that, like "the European schools," flunks out some of the class every year—though in fact Boston Latin among others does so, while British "grammar" schools in their first four years never flunk out anybody); of concern for administrators rather than human beings ("The main problem in wealthy suburban schools is to guide the parent whose college ambitions outrun his child's abilities, etc."—where "the main problem," quite obviously, is to overcome the somnolence and status-orientation of too-lucky children and get them really interested in their own education).

In one important respect, *Slums and Suburbs* takes a long step backward. In *The American High School Today,* Dr. Conant was willing to rate a school's instruction in English and Social Studies as "adequate" or "inadequate," basing his "judgment" on "conversations with the teachers, the students, and, in many cases, a visit to one or more classes." Now he will allow no measurements whatever of quality: "Laymen should not become involved in judging the effectiveness of teachers." Dr. Conant's original "ratings," of course, were unrealistic—in most schools, instruction is much better than "adequate" in some classrooms, and worse than "inadequate" in others. The average is meaningless. But if we are talking about that part of the child's education that occurs in school, is there anything worth serious discussion *except* the effectiveness of teachers?

Most of Dr. Conant's recommendations are familiar, and no one can quarrel with them. More money must be spent on slum schools; employers and unions must be forced to open jobs to Negro applicants; the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges must stop its ludicrous efforts to protect bright children from education; big cities must decentralize the management of their schools (but why only to districts? why not to the individual school, which is where the problems must be solved?). A few of his ideas are striking

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and new—most notably, his proposal that shop teachers should be former mechanics (as they are in France) rather than people who majored in industrial arts at a teacher-training college, and his suggestion that the suburban schools take responsibility for experimenting with the education of dull children.

One recommendation (placed significantly in the suburbs section) represents a desperate and unfortunate effort at a compromise between the advocates of "high standards" and the advocates of universal education. Dr. Conant proposes a rigorous nationwide examination for entrance to graduate schools of arts and sciences, law, and medicine. The examination suggested, involving fairly considerable competence in all fields of academic study, would kill all hope of valid specialized education in the undergraduate colleges, and Dr. Conant's defense of it—that "the level of accomplishment I am suggesting is less than that attained by the European who enters a university"—is simply untrue. The essence of higher secondary education in Europe is rather intense specialization, and if the ultimate examination involves many subjects, the student is permitted (indeed, expected) to "fail" part of it, without penalty. With all their faults, European schools see that students are interested in some subjects more than in others.

Despite its sloppiness, its reactionary racial undertones ("I for one," Dr. Conant writes, "would reserve judgment as to the answer to the question whether there is a correlation between race and scholastic attitude"), its renewal of Dr. Conant's insistence that "the schools are really doing a magnificent job," *Slums and Surburbs* will probably be a useful book. Dr. Conant's natural audience is a poorly informed community with an underdeveloped bump of social consciousness. If nothing in this book will be at all new or startling to people who have been concerned with problems of social class in education, much of it will probably come as a surprise to Dr. Conant's friends in the ranks of big money and big politics. Progress in education is forced primarily by pressure from the lower ranks —teachers and parents and children, or principals, or conceivably district superintendents, but no higher. Yet *Slums and Suburbs* may work to diminish the odds against teachers who are gambling for higher stakes than Dr. Conant's temperament allows him to risk.

What a pity, though, that a man in Dr. Conant's position should wish to advocate goals so mean and so narrow, so easily accepted by the self-satisfied!

SPAIN AND ITS JEWS

DE MAHOMET AUX MARRANES (FROM MOHAMMED TO THE MARRANOS). By LÉON POLIAKOV. *Calmann-Lévy (Paris). 374 pp. 16.90 NF.*

Reviewed by ALBERT A. SICROFF

AS WITH SO MANY developments which set Spain apart from the rest of Europe, the course of Jewish history in that country owes its peculiarity to the presence there of Islam. The irruption of the followers of the Prophet into the Iberian Peninsula in 711 broke the pattern of persecution that had been gathering around the Iberian Jews with increasing intensity ever since the Visigoth, King Reccared, had converted to Catholic Christianity in 589. Islam brought a religious tolerance which safeguarded Spanish Jewry from the anti-Semitic persecutions of Christian Europe. When some 650 years later the Jews of Spain again came to know persecution as a dominant condition of their lives, it was to be under circumstances which had no counterpart elsewhere. Léon Poliakov's study of anti-Semitism in Spain (the second of a projected four-volume *Histoire de l'Antisémitisme*) permits us to follow this extraordinary story. Yet it must also be said that the author frequently makes judgments and comparisons which only serve to blur the picture he so painstakingly builds up.

Moslem tolerance permitted the emergence of what has been called "the Spain of the three religions" where (first under Islamic and then under Christian rule) Jew, Christian, and Moslem were able to share in a great moment of civilization and culture. Islamic domination meant a flourishing period for the Spanish Jews, and is deservedly called the Golden Age of the Jews in Europe. Poliakov describes an impressive array of Jewish figures who crossed the scene of Moslem Spain: Hasdai ibn Shaprut, physi-

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cian, diplomat, and religious leader, who in one capacity sought the independence of Spanish Judaism from the traditional preeminence of the Babylonian *gaonim* and in another was called upon to cure the obesity of the Leonese Christian king, Sancho I, so that he might regain his throne; Samuel ibn Nagrela, royal minister of the king of Granada, military leader of troops in the field, a calligrapher and religious polemicist who did not shrink from underscoring the numerous contradictions of the Koran; Ibn Gabirol, called the first philosopher of the European Middle Ages; and Abraham ibn Ezra, mathematician, poet, astrologer, the first theologian to notice that the book of Isaiah was the work of two different authors.

Though the Jews had a brilliant career under Moslem domination, their role—as Poliakov shows—was nevertheless only an accessory one: they contributed to but did not alter in any fundamental way the well-developed civilization and culture of their overlords. It was under the reconquering Christian kings that the Jews made contributions which were considerably more decisive: here they interpreted for and made accessible to their more primitive Christian masters the dazzling Islamic culture which these had come upon in moving southward from their mountain strongholds. Although Poliakov does not develop the point, he is correct in asserting that as the principal agents who transmitted the sumptuous Moslem way of life to the fascinated Christians, the Jews not only Islamized Christian Spain, but also Judaized it.

Thus, it can be seen that the persecutions which befell the Jews in Spain from the 14th century on had a different point of departure from the anti-Semitism of other European countries. Here the Jews were no pariah people, in any ordinary sense of that term; they were protected and privileged by royalty, nobility, and the Church hierarchy, for all of whom they performed vital services. The movement against the Jews, which began seriously with the riots of 1391, must be understood, then, as a reaction by the masses of Spanish Christians against the spectacle of so many Jews in positions of influence and power—a situation that the distinguished Spanish scholar, Américo Castro, has referred to as a sort of "internal reconquest" or as a "sub-reconquest." The Christian populace was turning inward energies which had long been directed against the external Moslem enemy, seeking to wrest control of their country from what they felt to be the oppressive hands of the Jewish "enemy" in their midst. Unfortunately, Poliakov seems to have missed this important point concerning the origin of Spanish anti-Semitism. His fascination with a generic notion of anti-Semitism is such that even when he refers to Castro's idea of "inner reconquest," its only significance for him is that it marked "the slow assimilation of the Spanish people to the principles and usages of medieval Christianity." But the engine which powered the Spanish persecution of the Jews was made in Spain, however much some of its parts might have resembled those of foreign makes. And it pushed Spanish anti-Semitism in directions which were taken by no other anti-Jewish persecutions in European history. This fact emerges very clearly from Poliakov's substantial documentation.

THE 1391 RIOTS against the Jewish communities drove a great number of Jews to baptism and the shelter of the Church. For a moment the converts—the *conversos* or New Christians—were able to retain their preeminent positions and, moreover, were even permitted to penetrate the Church hierarchy itself. But soon the "Jew in Christian clothing" was discovered; and there followed a series of pure-blood statutes designed to circumscribe the activities of all Christians of Jewish ancestry. The establishment of the Inquisition in 1478 bears a special relationship to these statutes which Poliakov has not grasped. He is right in stating that many New Christians opposed the establishment of the Inquisition, but he does not appear to realize that the Spanish Inquisition also numbered Judeo-Christians among its first advocates and ministers. For about a quarter of a century, distinguished *converso* ecclesiastics such as Alonso de Cartagena (Bishop of Burgos and spokesman for Spain at the Council of Basle) and Alonso de Oropesa (General of the Order of St. Jerome, the most important monastic order in 15th-century Spain) had been calling for an inquiry into the faith of the Judeo-Christians. Their hope was that if the "Judaizers" among them were rooted out, the remaining New Christians would be able to escape the

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jurisdiction of the pure-blood statutes. But after the Inquisition began, so many instances of clandestine Judaism were discovered that all New Christians were rendered even more suspect than before. This led, in turn, to the final measure of Spanish persecution: the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, not simply because they were Jews but because they were thought to be contaminating the New Christians.

Poliakov evidently has had access to the materials which would have enabled him to present a fully coherent picture of anti-Semitism in Spain along the lines sketched above. However, seduced by an overly abstract conception of anti-Semitism, he sees Spain simply as adopting measures which had been used elsewhere in Christendom. The Spanish Inquisition becomes, for him, a refurbishing of the medieval Inquisition—and this despite the fact that the latter was directed against a heretical doctrine while the former was an "anti-personnel weapon" aimed at the Jew lurking in the person of the Christian. Poliakov also sees Spanish anti-Semitism as similar to the Nazi persecutions. It apparently is of no importance to him that the Spanish "Jewish problem" was couched in terms which permitted of no "final solution": in Hitler's Germany the question of the Jews would not have lingered on for centuries.

Poliakov is at his best in describing the consequences of Spain's anti-Semitism, and he does an excellent job of presenting the great variety of "solutions" at which the Jews grasped. In the complex picture he draws, we find some Jews who continue to practice their religion openly while they search their souls in the hope of uncovering the sins for which they might atone and so soften the hand of God upon them. Others, while remaining aloof from their religion, refuse to convert to Christianity, fully aware of the penalties that await a lukewarm or insincere convert. Some who submit to baptism do so to hide an aggressive atheism which denounces Abraham, Jesus, and Mohammed alike as impostors. There are also those who, having converted to Christianity, come to regret their weakness in yielding. These are the Marranos. Many of them seek expatriation or engage in international commerce in order to have a pretext for travel, thereby avoiding constant Inquisitorial surveillance. The Marranos wander over the face of Europe, straying as far as Constantinople, striving to maintain some shred of their Judaism. From among them come the exotic messianism of a Sabbatai Zevi, the philosophical innovations of a Spinoza, and the fantastic career of a Joseph Nassi, whose influence with a Turkish sultan helped him humble a king of France.

The Marranos who were unable to leave Spain continued to practice their Judaism secretly, sometimes in the very strongholds of Spanish Christianity (such as the monastic cells of the Order of St. Jerome)—and were the constant prey of the Inquisition. Perhaps the most impossible drama of all was acted out by those *conversos* who remained in Spain, determined to be good Christians, only to find themselves the perennial targets of the pure-blood statutes. The dilemma of such individuals is poignantly described by the Judeo-Christian poet Anton Montoro in his lament to Queen Isabella: "I have said the Creed, I have adored the pots of fat bacon, I have heard masses and I have prayed and still I cannot rid myself of this face of a *confeso* [i.e., Judeo-Christian]. . . . I have prayed with devotion, I have said the rosary hoping to erase my deficiency but I have never been able to lose the name of vile old Jew."

Montoro's lament was prophetic. In subsequent years, as the pure-blood investigations became more rigorous, it was increasingly difficult for Spaniards of any degree of Jewish ancestry to obliterate their *mácula*. So diligent did Spain become in her efforts to wipe out the national "stain" that she only succeeded in finding out how widespread Jewish presence was in her land. Irony of ironies: in the eyes of all Europe, as Poliakov shows, Spain was a land of Jews.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

MARXISM: AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY. By GEORGE LICHTHEIM. *Praeger. 412 pp. $8.50.*

Reviewed by DENNIS H. WRONG

NOT MANY OF THE scores of books on Marxism that have appeared in the last few decades are likely to remain of enduring interest. George Lichtheim's magnificently

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compressed yet fully comprehensive study ought to be an exception. Free both from ideological animus and apologetics, it yet manages to avoid being "academic" in its demonstration of the relevance of Marxist ideas to modern history. Lichtheim is uniquely qualified for the task he has undertaken. Having grown up in Germany and long a resident of England, he is well versed in both German philosophy and British economics, a background he shares with the chief protagonist of his book, but with few recent analysts of Marxism. It may not be necessary to be Julius Caesar in order to understand him, but in trying to understand a thinker (as opposed to a historical actor) it is invaluable to be thoroughly acquainted with the intellectual ingredients that went into the original theoretical synthesis. And such an acquaintance becomes all the more valuable when one's goal is to carry forward the history of the synthesis into the present, showing how it has been influenced by later developments, intellectual as well as political.

All great philosophical systems are, of course, syntheses of previously distinct intellectual traditions. Marx's thought has commonly been described, both by his supporters and by his critics, as a union of German philosophy, French politics, and British economics. To orthodox followers—of whom there are virtually none left, if one excludes the selective and distorted constructions of Soviet ideologists—it is an immense edifice of enduring value and universal significance. Critics, on the other hand, have seen it as a hodgepodge of disparate elements held together only by the revolutionary hopes and will of its author. Since the hopes have not been fulfilled, Marxist theory, they contend, must be measured by the standards of modern scholarly and scientific thought in the various intellectual disciplines it touches, and by these standards it is found wanting.

Lichtheim pays tribute to the grandeur of the Marxian synthesis by refusing to treat it with the historically short-sighted condescension of latter-day critics, while nevertheless demonstrating its fragmentation and loss of relevance now that the circumstances of European history to which it was a response no longer exist. "The 19th century," he writes, "was . . . a great age of system-building; it was also an epoch rich in revolutionary social currents. But the two came together only in the person of Marx—they signally failed to do so in the case of Comte, Mill, or Spencer, to mention three of the leading claimants to celebrity in the field of social philosophy. The unmistakable aura of absurdity which clings to figures like Comte or Spencer . . . and the diminishing relevance even of Mill, suggests a failure rendered all the more conspicuous by Marx's achievement." Four hundred pages later Lichtheim writes the epitaph of a system which, both as idea and as guide to political action, was as much a creature of its time as the bourgeois society it aimed to transcend: "What remains is, on the one hand, the travestied fulfillment of these aims in a reality which is their actual negation; and on the other, the *caput mortuum* of a gigantic intellectual construction whose living essence has been appropriated by the historical consciousness of the modern world; leaving the empty husk of 'dialectical materialism' to the ideologists of a new orthodoxy. In the sunset of the liberal era, of which Marxism is at once the critique and the theoretical reflection, this outcome confirms the truth of its own insight into the logic of history; while transferring to an uncertain future the ancient vision of a world set free."

BETWEEN THESE opening and concluding statements, Lichtheim combines critical exegesis with intellectual and social history—a method which, as he recognizes, is consistent with that of Marxism itself. His unifying conception is the definition of Marxism as the theoretical and political link between the French and the Russian Revolutions. Not that (it is perhaps unnecessary to add) he affirms the Communist claim that the Russian Revolution was the fulfillment and extension of the libertarian ideals of its predecessor. Soviet totalitarianism, in fact, constitutes the final failure of Marxism, since it transforms Marxism into the ideology of a new political oligarchy which has reversed the relationship between state and society that Marx and Engels—in common with their Victorian contemporaries—always took for granted. 1918 is the terminal date of the period that begins with the rise of the Jacobins, the period in which the elements of the Marxist synthesis originated

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and for which it provided a viable analysis and a relevant guide to action.

According to Lichtheim, Marx's early left-Hegelian phase was a response to the impact of the French Revolution on backward and divided Germany. After the defeat in 1848 of hopes for a German re-enactment of 1789, Marx turned away from the revolutionary chiliasm he had inherited from the Jacobin tradition and subordinated his political vision to his analysis of the mechanics of capitalist development with its indication that revolution would come only "in the fullness of time." The practical counterpart to his concentration on the "dismal science" was his interest in establishing organizational links between revolutionary socialists and moderate, non-socialist trade unionists, especially in England. His opposition to the revolutionary extremism and conspiratorial tactics of Blanqui's followers and of the Anarchists, the carriers of the old Jacobin vision, also now became overt. A "scientific socialism" based on the labor movement became the distinctive hallmark of Marxism, although the old messianism came briefly to life—to be interred forever after by Marx and Engels themselves—in Marx's passionate eulogy of the Paris Commune of 1870. By the next decade Marxism had come to stand for "reform" rather than revolutionary utopianism in France, even before it became the ideology of German Social-Democracy.

But it was in Germany, a country which unlike France had never experienced a revolutionary break in its history, that the "orthodox Marxism"—still equated with Marxism as such by many who know better than to take seriously the ritualism of Soviet ideologists—was developed, chiefly by Engels, in the years after Marx's death in 1883. It became the ideology of a labor movement which was compelled to give priority over socialist goals to the demand for political democracy that had already been achieved in France and England. Authoritarian government, combined with an improving economic situation as Germany became industrialized and rose to the rank of a major world power, favored the substitution of reformist practice for revolutionary agitation. In order to bring theory into line with the actual practice of the Social-Democratic party, the revisionists, led by Bernstein, tried to modify the expectations of revolution which were built into received Marxist doctrine. But this attempt was successfully resisted by the party's orthodox, centrist wing, headed by Kautsky. After the turn of the century the mounting international crisis led to efforts by the Austro-Marxists and by Polish socialists—Rosa Luxemburg was the most famous—to reformulate the expected collapse of world capitalism in terms of imperialist conflict and war. Among Russian Marxists the long debate began over the shape of the coming Russian Revolution.

SUCH, IN BARE SUMMARY, is the historical framework, sketched in with admirable economy and penetration, of Lichtheim's study. But he is not merely writing the history of Marxism in 19th-century European politics. The essential value and originality of his approach lies in the freedom with which he moves backward and forward between the crucial events of the period covered—showing how, for example, the link between democratic revolution and nationalism in the Jacobinism of 1790 evoked echoes among the German radicals of 1848, only to be broken by the subsequent defeat of German liberalism and the triumph of conservative authoritarianism, until it was forged again in post-revolutionary Russia. Lichtheim's intention is not to write history as such but to portray the shaping of Marxist theory by each of the major events of the period—events to which radical intellectuals reacted in terms of their own national situations. The interaction between theory and history is his true subject, and his dual perspective illuminates the tensions within Marxism to a degree that the conventional contrast between Marxist theory and the evolution of capitalism on the one hand, and the Soviet regime on the other, quite fails to match.

Thus Lichtheim demonstrates that the young Marx of the 1840's, on becoming a revolutionary in a Germany "still struggling to emerge from the Middle Ages," rejected the aging, conservative Hegel by reaching back "without knowing it . . . to the youthful Hegel . . . [who] had sketched a scheme of liberation as far-reaching as anything envisaged in the *Communist Manifesto* or the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1795–6." Over fifty years later a similar re-

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versal occurred with vastly greater historical consequences when Lenin, after the February Revolution of 1917, abandoned the political strategy deduced from the now orthodox doctrine (to which the mature Marx and Engels had contributed) by seizing "upon those elements of the Marxian synthesis which went back to the Jacobin strain in Marx's own thinking."

Before the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, Lenin, in common with all Russian Marxists, accepted the orthodox "German" view that the collapse of Czarism must lead to a "bourgeois" rather than a "proletarian" revolution, since the latter required the prior creation of a fully capitalist economy. Today it has become a cliché to insist that the victory of the Bolsheviks is an anomaly in terms of Marxist doctrine. Lenin's sudden adoption of the view that his party could and should seize power in its own name is usually attributed to sheer political opportunism or the influence of his pre-Marxist, populist-terrorist background—a background indigenous to Russia. Certainly these played an important part. But Lichtheim shows that the entire issue of the role of a proletarian socialist party in a "bourgeois" revolution was prefigured in 1848 when Marx and Engels, facing the prospect of revolution in a Germany as backward in relation to France as was the Russia of 1917 in relation to Western Europe as a whole, for a short time held a position similar to Lenin's on the eve of October. "The simplest way of putting the matter is to say that the situation erroneously assumed by Marx and Engels in 1848 to exist in Germany turned out, seventy years later, to be present in Russia. By then, however, Marxism had become synonymous with European socialism and the latter had become democratic." Even before his about-face in 1917, Lenin's organizational model of a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries was reminiscent of the Blanquist overtones of the *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* drawn up by Marx and Engels in 1850.

What came to be known as Leninism, therefore, is neither utterly discontinuous with previous Marxist thinking, nor is it simply its practical application, as claimed by those whose interest in Marxism is limited to anti-Soviet polemics. Viewed historically (as Lichtheim views it), Marxism is seen to have contained conflicting tendencies corresponding to the variety of situations faced by radicals of the previous century. But Lenin's success in 1917 had fatal consequences for Marxism. With supreme power in the hands of a Marxist party, the initiation of state-controlled industrialization was the next step: it took the form of Stalinist totalitarianism based on "planned revolution from above." In this way, Soviet Marxism came to show its present face to the world as a technique for forcibly industrializing and totally reorganizing backward societies, while at home "the official ideology performs the basic service of protecting the self-appointed guardians of the status quo from the danger of acquiring too clear a notion of their veritable role." Thus Marxism, originally determined to abolish the gap between ideal and reality, itself becomes an ideology papering over a similar gap between its libertarian professions and the actuality of Soviet totalitarianism.

In stressing his historical and political argument, I have neglected the strictly theoretical parts of Lichtheim's book, which include an extremely lucid review of Marxian economics. But his most original thesis is his contention that the core of Marxism, derived from Hegelian philosophy, was originally the belief in the "union of theory and practice" and that this standpoint was gradually adulterated and abandoned by Engels after Marx's death. Influenced by positivism and Darwinian evolutionism, Engels refashioned Marxism into a total "scientific" theory of nature as well as of human nature and history. Thus he, not Marx, is the author of "dialectical materialism" and of the historical inevitabilism which has proved so vulnerable to criticism. Engels's restatement of Marxism makes problematic the role of a revolutionary party when the breakdown of capitalism is in any case held to be inevitable. Moreover, it exposes Marxian theory to the positivist "fact-value" problem of how and why it is mandatory to affirm the socialist future as desirable merely because this future is the guaranteed outcome of natural laws operating in the realm of history.

Other analysts of Marxism have seen the doctrine of the union of theory and practice

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as central—some of Sidney Hook's early writings and Alfred G. Meyer's short volume published in 1954 come to mind. But no one writing in English, at least, has (to my possibly imperfect knowledge) shown as fully as Lichtheim the intimate connection between this Hegelian perspective and Marx's revolutionary hopes for "a world made new," or its incompatibility with a positivist methodology and theory of knowledge. Marx's famous statement that "other philosophers have only interpreted the world whereas the point is to change it" is usually understood as an essentially arbitrary assertion of a preference for political action over purely theoretical understanding *sine ira et studio*. But what Marx meant was that the world can only be interpreted or understood correctly in the very act of trying to change it. The dualisms within positivist methodology of objective fact and subjective value, of prediction and control, are overcome in such a theory of knowledge no less than the metaphysical distinction in German Idealism between the ideal and the real, which Marx was specifically concerned with criticizing.

If criticism that treats Marxism as a scientific determinist theory is not fully relevant, one may still reject Marx's inverted Hegelian theory of knowledge as metaphysical mumbo-jumbo. Yet there are curious resemblances between it and a number of tendencies in modern thought: theory and practice—understanding and changing—are inseparably fused in the *experience* of psychoanalytic therapy, if not in Freud's old-fashioned scientific objectivism; certain aspects of existentialist thought and some theories of knowledge which take their point of departure from aesthetic experience point in the same direction; so in the philosophy of science does the conception of "personal knowledge" developed by Michael Polanyi, who also happens to be an uncompromising critic of Marxism and all its works.

It would take another book to explore the implications for modern thought of Marx's materialized or "secularized" Hegelianism. George Lichtheim's purpose is the different one of showing how the Hegelian-derived conception of a revolutionary act fusing for all time the ideal and the real in a new "kingdom of freedom" influenced Marx's political outlook and was later subordinated to the demands of a changed political and intellectual situation. Lichtheim is prepared to acknowledge that there may be salvageable elements in Marxism, but—as his refusal to become involved in the rather tiresome contemporary debate over the "humanism" and "existentialism" of the young Marx indicates—he is disposed to insist that the original synthesis cannot be grasped if it is considered *sub specie aeternitas* rather than as a historical product. And here he convinces us that he remains true to the spirit of the system whose ultimate failure he records.

A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE

FIGHTER AND PROPHET: THE JABOTINSKY STORY; THE LAST YEARS. By JOSEPH B. SCHECHTMAN. *Thomas Yoseloff. 643 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by ELIAS COOPER

VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY once told his Jewish audience in Poland: "I have spoiled your children, taught them to break discipline (and sometimes windows), tried to persuade them that the true translation of *kometz aleph-o* is not 'learn to read' but 'learn to shoot.'" The author of this remarkable statement was in the decade preceding the Second World War the *enfant terrible* of the Zionist movement, feared and often vilified—to the point of being called "Vladimir Hitler"—by his fellow Zionists. In these days, when the questions over which he created so much stormy controversy are largely settled, Jabotinsky is coming more and more to be seen as the embattled visionary who foretold the doom of European Jewry and who could not rest with his terrible knowledge of what was to come if the Jewish people—and more particularly the Zionist movement—did not act quickly and radically.

This is the image of Jabotinsky presented by Dr. Schechtman in the second and final volume of his biography, *Fighter and Prophet*, which covers the years of Jabotinsky's major struggles with the Zionist movement and of his most controversial activity. The book gives an account, as lively and readable as it is scholarly, of the period in which Jabotinsky was an active Zionist;

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broke with the World Zionist Organization; launched both a competing New Zionist Organization and a National Labor Federation (in opposition to the socialist Histadrut in Palestine); founded a national military organization—the Irgun Zvai Leumi—and engaged in unilateral negotiations with various governments on behalf of a Jewish state. And while Dr. Schechtman's work clearly grows out of an attempt to justify his subject, he has been able through both volumes to maintain the kind of thoroughness and cool objectivity that enables him to contribute not only to a temperate assessment of a single man's career but to a greater understanding of the problems of the Zionist movement as a whole.

THE CHARGES LEVELED against Jabotinsky were grave ones, summed up in the claim that he was a reactionary fascist. His most ardent enemies were the Labor Zionists, who were particularly violent about his view that in Palestine the labor unions should be denied the right to strike. Others who may not have shared Mapai's concern for the inviolability of the rights of the labor movement did share its alarm about the Jabotinsky-inspired, uniformed youth cadres. His enemies had much evidence to support their view of him. The militancy of, and the methods employed by, his organizational network gave weight to the characterization of Jabotinsky as a fascist; indeed, he had proclaimed: ". . . our true field is *Mittelstand*. We will never be able to come to terms with people who possess in addition to Zionism, another ideal." But, as Dr. Schechtman points out, it was the Jewish state itself, rather than its ultimate political structure, which was the object of Jabotinsky's intransigence. Whenever committed fascists appeared in his own movement, he did everything in his power to isolate them. In the 1930's he wrote ". . . the dream of a dictator has become epidemic. I use this opportunity to state once more that I am the implacable enemy of this dream." Militarism had no value for him beyond furthering the establishment of a Jewish state.

During the time when the World Zionist Organization felt itself in no position to demand statehood in Palestine and had to content itself with the idea of a "productive community," Jabotinsky was demanding the

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return to Herzlian political Zionism. His program called for a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan to be created by mass colonization and financed by a national loan. It was for this end that Jewish youth was to take up arms and that the Zionist movement was to take the offensive. In 1917 he worked to form the Jewish Legion within the British Army to fight exclusively on the Palestine front. When the British Mandatory government began to overturn the League of Nation's Mandate and show its hostility to Zionism, he organized the Betar youth movement, which was to undertake difficult defense assignments in Palestine and at the same time defend Jewish life and property in Eastern Europe. When the Arab attacks on the Yishuv succeeded in influencing the Mandatory government to cut off Jewish immigration to Palestine—just at the time when the Nazis were tipping their hand to European Jewry—he sanctioned rebellion by the Irgun Zvai Leumi against the British administration. Finally, he worked feverishly for the establishment of a Jewish army to do battle against the Axis.

THE MAIN SOURCE of Jabotinsky's alienation from the majority of the Zionist organization, from his point of view, was the question of the priority of commitments. Early in the Hitler regime he warned, "Imagine that a fire breaks out in a crowded movie house; people begin a frantic stampede to get out, but all doors and windows are hermetically sealed." The creation of the Jewish state, then, must be effected immediately and the Jewish population of Europe resettled there. Labor Zionists would bear the responsibility for prolonging the Jewish exile, for by emphasizing the class struggle and making socialism a necessary condition of Zionism, they were dividing a loyalty which must remain single and unconditional. Private enterprise—anything that would effectively further the mass colonization of Jewish Palestine—must be promoted.

Though Jabotinsky's Revisionist party constituted the third strongest faction in the World Zionist Organization, there was no possibility that his views might be accepted or implemented during his lifetime. His relations with Mapai, the controlling force of the movement, were of a kind to admit no opening for mutual dealings or influence. As is often the case with such tragic figures of history, however, his enemies outlived him to see the day when both his prophecies were to come true and many of his attitudes to be taken over by them. By now—and it is only twenty-one years since his death—historians of Zionism are almost certainly prepared to cast him in a different role from that accorded him by his contemporaries.

In a note written at the time when he was expelled from Palestine, Jabotinsky said: "Why do I, an old Zionist, get this odd feeling of relief—when I leave Eretz Israel for a while? I say to myself: Thank God, now . . . I am not going to see angry faces and wolfish sidelong glances; and read no poisonous and hateful articles. Is this supposed to be the feeling with which a man sails from his homeland? And for the first time I realized that just as in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, we are fated to build the Temple in an atmosphere of hatred." Shortly before he died, Jabotinsky announced that he wished to be buried where he died and that his remains were to be transferred to Israel only at the request of a free Hebrew government. He is at the moment still buried in Long Island.

"THE CLATTERING TRAIN"

THE NATION'S SAFETY AND ARMS CONTROL. By ARTHUR T. HADLEY. *Viking. 160 pp. $3.00.*

ARMS CONTROL, DISARMAMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY. *Edited by* DONALD G. BRENNAN, with the sponsorship of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. *George Braziller. 475 pp. $6.00.*

Reviewed by GORDON A. CRAIG

IN HIS HISTORY OF THE Second World War, Sir Winston Churchill tells us how, in a moment of despondency over what appeared to him to be the inevitable drift to war in 1935, he was further depressed by the recollection of some long forgotten lines from *Punch*:

Who is in charge of the clattering train?
The axles creak and the couplings strain;

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And the pace is hot and the points are near,
And Sleep has deadened the driver's ear;
And the signals flash through the night in vain,
For Death is in charge of the clattering train.

To many thoughtful persons in these days when reserves are being called back to the colors and the cry to resume nuclear testing in the atmosphere is raised, these lines must seem uncomfortably appropriate. It may be true, as Wayland and Elizabeth Young have written recently in these pages, ("Disarmament vs. Arms Control," August), that "it is now generally accepted among the informed that the arms race is too dangerous for a sane power to continue pursuing without any check or inhibition whatever"; but there has never been much evidence that any progress was being made toward devising such checks, and of late most of the signs have pointed in the other direction.

On the other hand, even discouraged observers may derive some crumbs of comfort from the sight of the remarkable number of books dealing with the arms race that have been rolling from the presses in recent years. In no previous period of national emergency has the general reader been offered so much informed and sophisticated analysis of the problems involved in formulating military and foreign policy: and whatever the course of events in the years that lie ahead, no one who owns a library card will be able to claim with much plausibility that he had no opportunity to discover what was going on in the world around him. How much good all this publishing activity will do no one would dare guess; but it cannot do harm.

To THIS ballooning literature two important works have now been added: Arthur Hadley's book on arms control, which had its origins in a summer study on the subject led by Victor F. Weisskopf and Jerome B. Wiesner of MIT; and the revised and expanded edition of the Fall 1960 issue of *Daedalus,* the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The second of these is probably the most satisfactory, and certainly the most comprehensive, volume that has yet appeared on the military problems that face the nation today, and within its covers are articles by two dozen of the country's leading students of military affairs and nuclear technology. Here, among other things, one will find a calm and objective exposition of the dangers of all-out war occurring within the next decade (Herman Kahn); discussions of the various proposals that have been made to avert that catastrophe (including an eloquent but rather lonely plea for unilateral disarmament by Erich Fromm); analyses of the kind of strategies best designed to promote arms stabilization (Henry Kissinger and Thomas Schelling); examinations of the past record of disarmament negotiation and of the special difficulties of negotiating with the Soviet Union (William Frye and Bernhard Bechhoefer); reflections on the possible influence of the smaller powers and of Red China in promoting or retarding international agreement (Paul Doty and Doak Barnett); and technical studies of the problems of nuclear test bans, inspection, and adjudication (Edward Teller, Bernard Feld, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Lewis Bohn, Louis Sohn, Arthur Larson, and others).

Despite the impressiveness of this vol-

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ume, however, it is likely that Arthur Hadley's book will find a wider audience. Mr. Hadley has the ability (which is not shared by all the contributors to the *Daedalus* volume) to write about technical matters in straightforward, vigorous, non-technical language, and he is not inhibited by any feeling that he should be objective. The editors of the *Daedalus* volume have thought it advisable to include different points of view, and its contributors have been charitable toward ideas that they do not themselves hold. Mr. Hadley speaks for himself and has no hesitation about attacking proposals he feels are dangerous or that he believes serve only to muddy discussion of national policy in this time of crisis.

Thus, he not only rejects unilateral disarmament as a policy for the United States (it would, he argues, make it more, rather than less, likely that Americans would die in war, since a defenseless America would invite a Soviet-Chinese rivalry for its riches that would probably be fought out in this hemisphere), but he turns his face against any policy that has as its end-objective either total disarmament or a monopoly of nuclear arms by the UN or some other international agency. It is his view that a world that was temporarily deprived of major weapons would—given the situation in places like the Congo and Kashmir—be even less stable than the one in which we live today, and that in such a world the United States would be exposed to the menaces of "fly-by-night Castros" and to the ever-present threat of rearmament by its major antagonists, since, even if all weapons were destroyed, "knowledge of how to make them would remain." As for the idea of a super-police force, Mr. Hadley is uncompromising in his opposition. "To remove the power and responsibility of protecting the Free World and keeping the strategic peace from those nations whose political traditions and recent international actions show a developing respect for justice, and to place this power instead in a new and traditionless force, created by negotiation and bureaucratic fiat, would seem an action of incredible risk."

The majority of the contributors to the *Daedalus* volume are not as forthright as this, but they seem to share Mr. Hadley's preference for more tentative approaches to the question of arms limitation. In the controversy between H. Stuart Hughes and Irving Kristol which appeared in COMMENTARY last July, they would be found for the most part on Mr. Kristol's side. Mr. Hadley himself calls for heightened effort to achieve a system of stable deterrence, which would allow the major world antagonists to possess enough nuclear and other weapons to make their defeat in an all-out war unlikely, if not impossible; which would be subject to the kind of inspection that would reduce to a minimum the ability or temptation to exceed the force levels agreed upon; and which would therefore limit the risk of all-out war. He admits that before this objective is reached many difficult technical problems will have to be solved, some of which we cannot at the present time even define; but in his own mind he is clear at least about two steps that will have to be taken toward that ultimate goal.

THE FIRST of these would be a modification of our present strategical position so as to concentrate upon secure second-strike weapons, like the Polaris submarine and the Minuteman missile, rather than upon vulnerable first-strike weapons, like the B-70 bomber. This step, which would amount to a tacit renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons, could not help but have a reassuring effect upon those who fear an American pre-emptive strike, while the reduction of the vulnerability of our weapons would make it less tempting to our antagonists to try such a strike themselves. The second necessary step would be a rapid build-up of our non-nuclear forces so that we could answer local aggressions in a manner that would not invite all-out war by the disproportionate nature of the weapons employed.

These two steps in themselves would help create an atmosphere in which negotiation for arms control could be more fruitful than it has been in the past. Until negotiations began to pay off, however, every care would have to be taken to avoid such de-stabilizing factors as accidental nuclear explosions, complications caused by wider dissemination of nuclear weapons or the intrusion of weapons into space, and fears induced by ill-prepared or precipitate programs of civil defense. Understandings with the Soviet

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government on these matters (the establishment of joint inspection teams to act in time of accidental nuclear incidents, for instance, or a joint ban on armed space vehicles) are, in Mr. Hadley's opinion, of urgent importance. If reached, they can facilitate the more comprehensive agreements the world requires.

ON ALL THESE POINTS, Mr. Hadley finds support among the contributors to the *Daedalus* volume. Indeed, Henry Kissinger (in an important modification of his earlier strategical views) is even more insistent that the first step toward reasonable stability in the arms race is an increase in our conventional forces, and Hubert Humphrey is even more emphatic about the necessity of a Soviet-American space agreement than Mr. Hadley himself. All told, therefore, the striking thing about these two volumes is their agreement, and the evidence they give of what Alistair Buchan, in a perceptive comment at the end of the *Daedalus* volume, calls "the growing consensus of opinion in the United States that limited arms control offers a more fruitful prospect than do schemes of comprehensive disarmament."

Whether this opinion is correct will doubtless depend upon two factors that receive more satisfactory treatment in the *Daedalus* volume than in Mr. Hadley's: namely, the ability of the United States and the Soviet Union to reach viable agreements of any importance, and the possibility of devising a system of arms control that will not be rendered meaningless by Red China.

In what Thomas Schelling calls the "area of military collaboration with potential enemies to reduce the likelihood of war or to reduce its scope and violence," our explorations have already revealed common interests between ourselves and the Soviet Union. "We both," Mr. Schelling writes, "have . . . a common interest in reducing the advantage of striking first . . . because [it] increases the likelihood of war. . . . We both have a common interest in avoiding the kind of false alarm, panic, misunderstanding, or loss of control that may lead to an unpremeditated war. . . . We have a common interest in not getting drawn or provoked or panicked into war by the actions of a third party. . . . And we may have an interest in saving some money by not doing on both sides the things that, if we both do them, tend to cancel out." Because of these common interests, we have been able to reach tacit understandings that have helped avoid some friction—in testing our rockets, for instance, we don't fire them toward each other's shores—but explicit negotiated agreements have so far escaped our attempts to reconcile the two positions.

The record of Soviet-American arms negotiations shows mistakes and rigidity and opportunism on both sides. If, as Bernhard Bechhoefer has written, the United States has made the mistake of employing negotia-

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tors who have not always mastered the technical aspects of the issues at stake, the Soviet Union has certainly been at fault in using negotiation not for the purpose of reaching agreements but for propaganda effect. Unless these and other obstacles to productive interchange are removed, it is difficult to see how the kind of mutual confidence that will make for effective arms control can possibly grow. In our own country public opinion will not indefinitely tolerate negotiations that never have positive results. Even the patient *Wall Street Journal* had taken to complaining about the administration's "Micawberism" in the test ban negotiations.

Finally, there remains the problem of Red China. It has become fashionable to say that the Soviet Union really wants an agreement on arms control with the United States because this will enable it to refuse to help Red China's atomic development, which it fears. But we have no hard evidence that this is Moscow's real attitude; and nothing in these volumes gives us any reason to suppose that the Soviet government would be willing to apply pressure to Peiping in order to make it conform to any Soviet-American agreement. In his essay on the subject in the *Daedalus* volume, Doak Barnett has written that "the record of recent years indicates that the Russians do not dictate to the Chinese Communists; they negotiate with them"; and he adds that the Soviet government would probably not wish to jeopardize the solidarity of its alliance with China by acting as we would like them to act. Even if we reach agreement on arms control with Moscow, therefore, there remains the problem of making the kind of concessions that will win Chinese conformity, and this may prove to be more perplexing than the other unsolved questions that worry us today.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

MARTIN MAYER'S most recent book is *The Schools*, a widely hailed study of American public education.

ALBERT A. SICROFF, who teaches at Vanderbilt University, has written an analysis of the growth of the Spanish blood laws.

DENNIS H. WRONG, the well-known sociologist, writes frequently for COMMENTARY. He has recently joined the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research.

ELIAS COOPER, a new contributor, is a free-lance writer who specializes in topics of Jewish interest.

GORDON A. CRAIG is a professor of history at Stanford and the author of *Makers of Modern Strategy*.

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